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ABSTRACT

Women's participation in congressional politics began in 1917 when Jeannette Pickering Rankin became the first woman in Congress. This was an unusual historic mark because women did not have the right to vote until 1920 when the 19th Amendment was passed. The book lists 12 prominent women who made an impact in U.S. politics. Corrine Boggs, like several other women legislators, took office due to the death of her husband. Corrine Boggs had always been involved in her husband's campaign and when she took his place, she continued to represent the citizens of her state well. Shirley Chisholm became the first African American to be elected to Congress and was very active in pursuing social equality programs. Helen Douglas was once an actress who used her popularity to become a successful legislator most noted for the "Market Basket" which had to do with price controls. Millicent Fenwick, an outspoken middle-of-the road politician, made a name for herself in Congress. Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro became the Democratic nominee for Vice President in 1984. Ella Grasso, from Connecticut, was the first woman governor who also served as a congresswoman. Margaret Heckler was an attorney who utilized her legal skills to become a hard working congresswoman. Texan, Barbara Jordan, another African American, worked on the Watergate hearings. Clare Booth Luce was a controversial congresswoman who also was noted for her theatrical contributions. Lynn Martin succeeded in her congressional role and went on to serve in the Bush cabinet. And Margaret Smith, who was one of the few women in the House and Senate, made great contributions to both. A complete list of all the women who served in Congress can be found in the appendices. (JAG)

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OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SERIES
THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ED 391 738

Outstanding Women Members of Congress

Foreword by
Margaret Chase Smith

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Dr. Shirley Washington

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Outstanding Women Members of Congress

by
Dr. Shirley Washington

on a grant from
The United States Capitol Historical Society
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

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FOREWORD

"Where is the proper place of a woman?" is a question that I have often been asked. The quizzers have asked this question defiantly, ambitiously, hopefully—and just plain inquisitively. But it has been asked so many times in so many ways and by so many types of people that, of necessity, my answer has had to transcend the normal and understandable prejudice that a woman might have.

My answer is short and simple—woman's proper place is everywhere. Individually it is where the particular woman is happiest and best fitted—in the home as wives and mothers; in organized civic, business and professional groups; in industry and business, both management and labor; and in government and politics.

Generally, if there is any proper place for women today, it is that of alert and responsible citizens in the fullest sense of the word. Citizenship is without sex. It makes no distinction between the rights and responsibilities of men and women, the only differential between men and women as citizens has been the availability, access to, and acceptance of leadership.

The traditional belligerency of most nations is in inverse ratio to the degree of freedom and recognition that the particular nation grants to women. In other words, wherever you find the woman's voice granted even an approach to parity with that of the man's, you will find a more peaceful nation.

I have known some outstanding women legislators including some of those mentioned in *Outstanding Women Members of Congress*. I think of women as people and while a woman should always be a lady whether a housewife or a Senator, she must do her homework and carry her full responsibility in whatever position she occupies.

Dr. Washington has selected well in her choice of women who typify all that is good in women legislators in this great country. Each in her own way brought dignity and courage to the institution of Congress. From Jeannette Rankin, who served in Congress even before women were granted the right to vote, to Helen Gahagan Douglas, who suffered under the early tactics of McCarthyites, to Barbara Jordan—these women of Congress brought civility to the crucial debates which shape our nation.

The Honorable Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME)
House of Representatives, 1940-49; Senate, 1949-73
April 1995

A NOTE ABOUT THE SERIES

Outstanding Women Members of Congress inaugurates a new publication series designed to provide thoughtful, balanced and informative summaries of the careers of some of the more remarkable men and women who have served in the nation's highest deliberative body. Future books awaiting publication in the *Outstanding Members of Congress Series* are planned on African Americans, athletes and Members who have contributed to the environment. In these future volumes, as in the present one, the profiles will represent only some of the many Members worthy of inclusion. An endless number of topics and personalities who have served the interests of our nation in Congress suggest themselves beyond these beginnings. As the series grows, it may be possible, even necessary, for more than one volume to be produced on a common subject. Certainly additional volumes with profiles of other dozens of outstanding women who have served in Congress would be easy to assemble.

Although the biographical essays in the series are not designed to be seminal research works of original scholarship, they are written by established scholars for a general audience to fulfill one of the United States Capitol Historical Society's primary functions—to make scholarship on the history of the United States Congress accessible to the public. It is hoped that these essays may inspire scholarly authors to produce full biographies on the personalities described, benefactors to finance more extended publications and, above all, readers to want to learn more about these distinguished persons and to emulate them and their careers of public service. *Outstanding Women Members of Congress* by Dr. Shirley Washington provides an auspicious beginning for this series.

Clarence J. Brown
President
United States Capitol Historical Society

INTRODUCTION

In 1917, crusading women's suffragist Jeannette Pickering Rankin (R-MT) became the first woman ever elected to the United States Congress, two full years before the 19th amendment to the Constitution gave women the right to vote. Over the next seven decades, the numbers of women who have served in Congress has reached a total of 174 by 1995. A record 48 women served in the House of Representatives during the 103d Congress (1993-95); and eight women were elected to the Senate in 1994 for the 104th Congress.

Although most of these women were elected on their own, 32 were appointed to the Senate or elected to the House or Senate to fill vacancies caused by the deaths of their husbands. This pattern of "widow successors" was particularly true of the early years of women in Congress. Twelve of the first 26 women elected to the House of Representatives before 1941 followed this path. Two of the first three women Senators—Hattie W. Caraway (D-AR) and Rose McConnell Long (D-LA)—succeeded their husbands. One woman, Emily Taft Douglas (D-IL), preceded her husband in Congress.

More traditional now are such women as Isabella Selmes Greenway (D-AZ), the only woman to represent Arizona in Congress. She accompanied her second husband to Arizona where she operated a hotel resort and cattle business and became active in Democratic Party politics after his death. Greenway was elected to Congress on her own in a special election in 1933; she was reelected in 1935. As a Member of Congress she gained renown for supporting veterans' legislation and public works projects. After she left Congress, Greenway remained active and chaired the American Women's Volunteer Service during World War II.

The twelve biographical essays in this book provide a glimpse into the trials, tribulations and triumphs of women in Congress. Lindy Boggs, Shirley Chisholm, Helen Gahagan Douglas, Millicent Fenwick, Geraldine Ferraro, Ella Grasso, Margaret Heckler, Barbara Jordan, Clare Boothe Luce, Lynn Martin, Jeannette Rankin and Margaret Chase Smith were selected by the advisory committee from among all the women former Members of Congress. Because the book resulted from a research grant from the nonpartisan United States Capitol Historical Society, current Members were excluded from consideration to maintain the project's nonpartisan character.

These twelve women were chosen for their contributions to Congress and for their value as role models of women's leadership. Each woman demonstrated, in her own way, that women leaders could be just as effective as men.

Rebecca L. Felton, the first woman in the United States Senate gave her first, last and only speech on the Senate floor on November 22, 1922. In the speech, the 87-year-old Georgian predicted that when women took their rightful place in Congress: "I pledge that you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness." The twelve women profiled in these pages proved Felton's prediction true.

Writing this book has been a labor of love. I wish to acknowledge the assistance and contributions of those who helped make the book possible. First, I want to thank the United States Capitol Historical Society, its president, Clarence J. Brown, and Dr. Donald Kennon, its chief historian. They and their staff afforded me the opportunity to pursue the project in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. I also wish to thank Mildred Amer of the Congressional Research Service as well as Dr. Raymond Smock, former Historian of the House of Representatives, for their assistance with the project. I also must thank my colleague, Dr. Doris Corbett of Howard University, for her camaraderie while we pursued parallel objectives.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank all of the former women Members of Congress who willingly gave of their time by allowing me to interview them for this project. Most of all, I am thankful for the opportunity to meet Margaret Chase Smith. Her interest in this project led her to write the foreword just weeks before her death. She was a great and gallant lady who will be missed; but we have her example as a truly outstanding woman Member of Congress to guide and inspire future generations.

Shirley Washington
June 1995

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Corinne Claiborne (Lindy) Boggs

(March 13, 1916-)
Democrat-Louisiana (Second District)
93d-101st Congresses (1973-1991)

(House Historical Office)

Congresswoman Lindy Boggs.

Persuasive Congresswoman From the South

Initially underestimated by her mostly male colleagues, Lindy Boggs, the gentle lady from Louisiana, came to be recognized as a natural politician and an effective legislator. During her years in the United States Congress, she quietly blazed a trail as a strong advocate of equal rights for women.

Boggs was the first woman from Louisiana to win a seat in the United States House of Representatives. In 1976 she became the first woman to chair a national convention of a major American political party. Three years later she participated in the first humanitarian effort ever launched by women in the United States Congress, or by women members in any legislative body in the world, to directly assist starving refugees in Cambodia and Thailand.

Although Lindy Boggs won her first election to Congress to replace her late husband, whose Congressional career she had actively supported, she remained in Congress for 18 years because of a consistently excellent record on behalf of her constituents and her ideals.

A Genteel Southern Upbringing

Born Marie Corinne Morrison Claiborne on March 13, 1916, on Brunswick Plantation in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana, she was the only child of Roland Claiborne and Corinne Morrison Claiborne. Her nurse nicknamed her "Rolinde," the French feminine diminutive of Roland, because she looked so much like her father. In time the nickname was shortened to "Lindy," and it has stuck with her ever since.

Lindy's father was an attorney in New Roads, Louisiana. During his campaign for a judgeship, he fell ill during the widespread influenza epidemic of 1918 and never recovered. Lindy was two-and-a-half years old when he died. Her mother moved the family back to the Brunswick Plantation to live with her father, Edward Morrison. Unfortunately, little Lindy's grandfather, whom she adored, died from tuberculosis three years later.

Lindy's mother married George Keller, who took them to live on his plantation called Moreau, also in Pointe Coupee Parish. Daddy George, as she called him, raised cotton on the plantation. She regarded her stepfather as a wonderful disciplinarian, strict but fair. He spent time with Lindy and her young cousins teaching them to ride horses, swim and fish. In fact, much of Lindy's young life was spent on the plantation which she grew to love very much.

Lindy Boggs remembers her childhood with affection. The close, loving environment had a profound effect on her personality development, which may explain why she was unique in Congress for having made no obvious enemies. She was always a bright and energetic child. Her privileged upbringing had no adverse effect on her innate compassion for other human beings. On the contrary, her sunny disposition probably emanated from such a happy childhood.

Lindy Claiborne began her primary education with a private tutor, then later attended St. Joseph's Academy in New Roads until she was 15, when she enrolled in Sophie Newcomb College, a women's college within the Tulane University complex. She graduated in 1935 with a B.A. degree in history and education. At Tulane she was the woman's editor for the *Hullabaloo*, the student newspaper, whose general editor was the handsome Hale Boggs. After graduation they worked together with other young people on a reform political group called the People's League. Hale Boggs went on to law school, while Lindy taught history in St. James Parish in Romeville for a short time after graduation. After Hale Boggs finished law school, they were married on January 22, 1938, when she was 21 years old.

(Courtesy of Lindy Boggs)

Lindy at age three in 1919.

With college friends in 1935, Lindy is seated at far right.

(Courtesy of Lindy Boggs)

(Courtesy of Lindy Boggs)

The Boggs family portrait: Barbara and Tommy are standing, with Hale, Cokie and Lindy seated.

Promoting Her Husband's Political Career

From 1939 to 1942, Lindy Boggs served as Democratic Party precinct captain of the 12th Ward in New Orleans; but her main political efforts were devoted to promoting Hale's career. She worked in all twelve of his campaigns as well as in his Congressional office.

After Hale was elected to the House of Representatives (he served 1941-43 and 1947-73), the family moved to Washington where Lindy served as a paid aide in his office. Her duties included listening to constituents and providing community service. She was the one who most often soothed egos bruised by her husband's sometimes brusque manner of handling people. She was the one who would sit and listen to their complaints for hours. One of her more notable accomplishments was the bill-tracking system she devised to keep her husband informed of pending legislation.

Lindy and the children also played an important role in shaping Hale Boggs's political thinking. For example, they are credited for convincing him to vote against segregationists in Congress by supporting the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 when it was not particularly popular for a Southerner to do so.

The Boggses were a close-knit nuclear family intimately involved in politics as a way of life. All three children have developed successful careers that involve politics in one way or another. Barbara Boggs married Paul Sigmund, a highly respected political science professor, and was elected a council member and later mayor of Princeton, New Jersey. Her younger sister, Cokie Roberts, started a career in the media by writing scripts for children's television programs, married Steven Roberts, a

respected journalist, and has since gone on to became a prominent Congressional journalist for National Public Radio and the American Broadcasting Company Television News Division. Thomas Boggs, Jr., has become a successful lawyer and lobbyist. With a twinkle in her eye, Lindy Boggs acknowledges that the secret to successful parenting was letting the children help to raise her, since she had been an only child.

As a model Washington political wife and mother, Lindy Boggs played important social and political roles. She was always willing to take on the mundane duties some Congressional wives avoided. Boggs served as president of the Women's National Democratic Club in 1958-1959, the Democratic Congressional Wives Forum in 1962 and the Congressional Club in 1971-1972. She also co-chaired the inaugural balls at the outset of both the Kennedy and the Johnson administrations.

The Widow Takes Her Husband's Seat

On October 16, 1972, the plane transporting Hale Boggs and Alaskan Representative Nick Begich on a campaign trip disappeared along the mountainous southern coast of Alaska between Anchorage and Juneau. Lindy and the children flew to Alaska to wait for word of the search. The Air Force finally called off the search after 17 days and accepted the inevitable on November 24, 1972.

Because of a quirk in Louisiana electoral law, the newly-convened 93d Congress had to declare the seat vacant and call for a special election. With the urging of family and friends, Lindy began campaigning for the seat. She proved to be a real vote getter on her own by winning 70 percent of the Democratic primary vote. She did even better in the general election by winning 80 percent of the vote against her Republican opponent.

Ironically, Lindy Boggs hadn't planned to run, but she reasoned that if her husband were found, she would just be holding the seat for him. His death hurt her deeply, but she was sustained by a devout Roman Catholic faith.

The Lady from Louisiana in Congress

Lindy Boggs took her seat in Congress on March 20, 1973. She was no ordinary freshman Member of Congress, nor a naive widow-successor with little knowledge of politics. She brought to her position an expertise developed over three decades of working to promote her husband's career. During Hale Boggs's last ten years in Congress, he had been Majority Whip and Majority Leader; and few doubted that he would have risen eventually to the speakership of the House. Lindy Boggs inherited some of her husband's prestige, but she earned even more respect for her own abilities.

Because of her traditionally gentle Southern Belle demeanor, Lindy Boggs was often mistaken, on first impression, for a pollyanna pushover by some of her male colleagues. It was a mistake that often lulled them into overconfidence. Those who worked closely with Congresswoman Boggs often noted that beneath the soft exterior was a tough politician who knew how to go after what she wanted. Although she was genuinely well-liked, a common joke about her disarmingly sweet personality included a warning not to stand too close to her in order to avoid getting diabetes. It was a bittersweet irony appreciated by friendly and potentially unfriendly colleagues. She had her ideals and she stuck to them

(UPI Bettmann)

Congresswoman Boggs is sworn in on March 27, 1973, by Speaker Carl Albert (right) as fellow Louisianans F. Edward Hebert (left) and Joe D. Waggonner (second from right) look on.

even when confronted by an equally winning personality with an opposite set of ideals, such as President Ronald Reagan whom she consistently voted against on critical budget and tax-cutting issues.

Her most important committee assignment was a seat on the powerful Committee on Appropriations, where she was most effective. She also served on the Committee on Banking and Currency and the Committee on House Administration.

Lindy Boggs's Congressional activities tended to focus on areas of housing policy, equal opportunities for women and minorities, technological development and Mississippi River transportation. A strong supporter of opportunities for women, she amended the Small Business Act to prohibit discrimination against women in securing loans and financial assistance. She was very skilled in getting male colleagues to co-sponsor bills that could have been viewed negatively as "less important women's issues." She obtained the support of Republican Newton Steers of Maryland to co-sponsor a bill on domestic violence when the subject was far less prominent than it has since become. She was proud of having brought into existence the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families to monitor American families under stress.

Much of the legislation that Boggs supported concerned her district, such as getting a post office or a dam built. For example, she was concerned with the Coast Guard's decision to close down the Vessel Traffic Service along the Mississippi River. She put in a few discreet phone calls and the bill's language was changed so that it did not hinder

the movement of traffic on the river. She also sponsored legislation to fund a national historical park across the Mississippi from New Orleans. The Jean Lafitte Park designed to preserve bayou vegetation had been dear to her late husband as well.

Boggs's non-legislative activities included serving on the Joint Committee on Bicentennial Arrangements because of her interest in preserving American history. She also chaired the Commission on the Bicentenary of the U.S. House of Representatives and submitted to the 101st Congress a book of profiles entitled, *Women in Congress: 1917-1990.*

In July 1990, Congresswoman Boggs announced that she would not run for reelection for the 102d Congress. She wanted to devote more time to her family especially since her daughter, Barbara Sigmund, had been stricken with cancer. "I can't give Barbara a hug from here," she was quoted as saying several times. As it turned out, her maternal instincts were right. The family lost Barbara at age 51, shortly before Lindy Boggs left Congress. She had served in the United States House of Representatives for 18 years.

To call her a retired person is a misnomer. Still extremely active, she commutes between homes in New Orleans and Washington. She is a special counsel to the president of Tulane University and has taught history courses there. She maintains an office at the university and has written her autobiography. In Washington, Boggs co-chairs the Commission on the Preservation of the Capitol and sits on the boards of several important institutions.

A natural politician, Lindy Boggs evolved from being an ideal Congressional wife into an effective and respected legislator in her own right. How did she do it? Her former colleagues have revealed some of her strengths. Tip O'Neill, the late Speaker of the House, pinpointed the secret of her success when he observed, "She's effective because nobody can tell her no." Another Democratic Louisianan colleague, Representative Gillis Long, commented on her fortitude: "Lindy's a good, tough politician who knows how to trade. And its awfully hard to get mad at her." And finally, Senator J. Bennett Johnston (D-LA) noted, "I honestly think she's exceedingly effective ... she is uncommonly persistent." Effective, persuasive, persistent and compassionate are the words those who know Lindy Boggs best use to describe her.

For Further Reading:

Lindy Boggs with Katherine Hatch, *Washington Through a Purple Veil: Memoirs of a Southern Lady,* (1994).
Women in Congress, 1917-1990, (1991).

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Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm

(November 30, 1924-)
Democrat-New York (12th District)
91st-97th Congresses (1969-1983)

(Library of Congress)

Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm.

Feminist, Teacher and Child Care Advocate

Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm scored a number of firsts during her political career. She was the first African-American woman to win a seat in the New York State Assembly from Brooklyn. She was the first African-American woman to win a seat in the United States House of Representatives; and in 1972, she became the first African American to campaign seriously for the presidential nomination of a major political party.

Chisholm had a reputation as a fearless, ambitious and outspoken maverick. She studied the issues thoroughly and she had utter confidence in her leadership ability. While these qualities were admired in a man, they often cost her dearly for daring to display them as a woman. She was perhaps the quintessential feminist, a serious student of politics who saw no reason why she should hesitate to use her talents in the service of others. Her fearless leadership style was greatly appreciated by supporters and just as ardently disapproved by her opponents.

Growing Up in Barbados and Brooklyn

Shirley Anita St. Hill was born on November 30, 1924, in Brooklyn, New York, the oldest of four daughters of Charles St. Hill and Ruby (Seale) St. Hill. Her father was an emigrant from British Guiana (now Guyana) who worked as an unskilled laborer in a burlap factory in New York. Her mother, an emigrant from Barbados, was employed as a seamstress and a domestic.

Because the family was poor, Shirley's mother took her three-year-old daughter to live with her mother on the family farm in Barbados. Shirley was later joined by two younger sisters who were also sent to live with their grandmother. Shirley and her sisters did not return to Brooklyn until she was eleven. During those formative years, she acquired the soft West Indian accent that would remain with her for life. She benefitted from the British elementary school system and the stern discipline preached by her loving grandmother who instilled in young Shirley the virtues of pride, courage and faith. She also learned to read and write before she was four years old.

Shirley returned to New York in 1934 to find life very different than it had been in Barbados. Shirley's hard-working parents moved to an apartment in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn where many more blacks lived. She experienced discrimination for the first time when she attended a school in racial transition. Her father was an avid reader

who introduced her to the teachings of Marcus Garvey, the West Indian African Nationalist who preached racial pride and black separatism.

Shirley did very well in school. In 1942, she graduated from Girl's High School, a public school in Brooklyn, with an academic diploma and a medal in French. Although she was offered scholarships to Vassar and Oberlin, she turned them down because they were still too expensive for her parents. Instead she chose to attend Brooklyn College, a subway ride away. She graduated cum laude with a degree in sociology in 1946.

A deep concern for the health and social development of young children led her to pursue a career in child care. She went on to earn a master's degree in childhood education from Columbia University in 1952. She also received a teacher certification in nursery, kindergarten and grades one through three, and a professional diploma in supervision and administration in education in 1961.

As a young woman, Shirley St. Hill taught nursery school at Mt. Calvary Child Care Center in New York from 1946 to 1952. She was a school director at the Friend In Need Nursery in Brooklyn from 1952 to 1953 and director of Hamilton-Madison Child Care Center in New York where she was responsible for the administration and supervision of 24 teachers and maintenance of personnel catering to the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of 130 youngsters between the ages of three and ten. She was also an educational consultant for New York's Division of Day Care from 1959 to 1964.

(Courtesy of Shirley Chisholm)

Shirley Chisholm, seen here as a college student, studied sociology and planned a career in childhood education.

Entering Democratic Politics in Bedford-Stuyvesant

On October 8, 1949, Shirley St. Hill married Conrad Chisholm, who was nine years older and whom she had met while at Columbia University. He worked for a private security agency that specialized in insurance claims for disability cases, a job that involved a great deal of travel. The Chisholms remained in Bedford-Stuyvesant where Shirley became very active in local politics through the Democratic political clubs.

Because the regular Democratic organization did not welcome the ideas of an African-American woman, Chisholm helped form an independent political club called the Bedford-Stuyvesant Political League (BSPL) and ran a door-to-door canvass and vote-getting campaign. The BSPL effort succeeded in electing the first black judge in Brooklyn history in 1953. In 1954 the BSPL proposed a full slate of black candidates. Although the slate was defeated by the regular organization's candidates, Democratic leaders recognized the potential power of the new organization.

Hoping to win over Chisholm and her followers, the regular party leaders elected her to the party's local board of directors. The old trick of silencing critics by taking them in didn't work; Chisholm continued to criticize the party's policies and to put forth the case for adequate services to the people of her district. Finally, party leaders tired of her behavior and voted Chisholm off the board. She continued to challenge them from the audience and others joined her. Chisholm would not stop until she achieved the goal of black representation at every level of government.

In the New York State Assembly

By 1964, Chisholm saw a chance to run for a seat in the New York State Assembly. She knew she would be stepping on a few toes of her male colleagues who were not ready to see a woman in a leadership position.

One good thing about these gender confrontations was the constant, unequivocal support of her husband.

After a very hard-fought campaign, Chisholm won election to the New York Assembly. Her triumph was not without tragedy; however, because her father died suddenly on the eve of her victory.

Chisholm developed a reputation for being a hard-working, studious and disciplined legislator. Her support of legislation was based on detailed study from which she seldom wavered. As a member of the Assembly's Education Committee, she continued her fight for underprivileged children and their families.

Of the 50 pieces of legislation she introduced, eight passed, including the 1965 landmark SEEK Program (Search for Elevation, Education and Knowledge) which was designed to help African-American and Puerto Rican high school dropouts who had college potential get into state universities while receiving remedial assistance. The controversial program opened educational opportunities to minorities and compensated for years of inadequate schooling in poor neighborhoods.

Her legislative agenda included helping domestic workers with unemployment insurance, protecting the tenure of female teachers after maternity leave, raising the maximum amounts of money that local school districts could spend on students and providing state aid to day care centers. She voted against public funds for private schools on constitutional grounds.

"Unbought and Unbossed": Running for the U.S. Congress

Chisholm's constituents appreciated her performance in the state legislature and rewarded her with reelection. By 1967, she focused on running for Congress due to a Supreme Court decision to create a new Congressional district in central Brooklyn. Chisholm was the first candidate to announce for the June 1968 primary, even though she knew the county Democratic organization would oppose her because she had been too independent and not a team player.

In the tough Democratic primary she ran under the slogan "Unbought and Unbossed" and defeated two opponents, Dolly Robinson, a former labor leader, and the much favored State Senator William C. Thompson. Normally, a primary victory in that district would have been tantamount to winning the general election; but she found herself facing James Farmer, a nationally recognized civil rights leader and former chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Moreover, he was the candidate of both the Republican Party and the Liberal Party, an important third force in New York politics.

Farmer's campaign was well-funded and gained national media attention. Although both candidates stood for similar district concerns regarding employment, housing, education, decentralized local control of schools and opposition to the Vietnam War, in the end Farmer could not overcome Chisholm's advantage of running on the Democratic ticket in a heavily Democratic district.

Moreover, Chisholm proved to be a master campaigner playing on the fact that Farmer was an outsider whereas she had lived in the district and served its people most of her life. She was also helped by Farmer's condescending attitude. His reference to her as "the little schoolteacher" who would not be taken seriously in Congress angered many women voters who happened to outnumber males by a large percentage in the district. In fact, Chisholm specifically appealed to women voters on issues

Congresswoman Chisholm was the first African-American woman to seriously campaign for the presidential nomination of a major party.

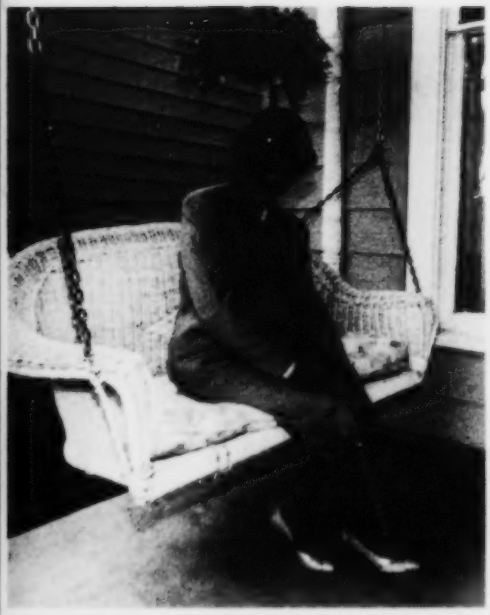
(Library of Congress)

of concern to them. She also reached out to the new Hispanic population with her ability to speak to them in Spanish. In the election of November 5, 1968, she defeated Farmer by a margin of two-and-a-half to one. In her victory celebration, Chisholm promised supporters that she would not be quiet in Congress.

"That Disruptive Woman": Chisholm's Congressional Career

On January 3, 1969, Shirley Chisholm made history as the first African-American woman elected to the Congress of the United States when she was sworn into the 91st Congress and took her seat in the House of Representatives. When the Democratic members of the House Ways and Means Committee assigned her to the Agriculture Committee and its subcommittees on rural development and forestry, she protested loudly to the Party Caucus that these panels had no relevance for her Brooklyn constituency. She was widely quoted as having described those who made her assignment as gentlemen whose only knowledge about Brooklyn was that a tree grew in it. It was a bold move for a freshmen Member to question the party leadership, but they relented and reassigned Chisholm to the Veterans Affairs Committee which had more relevance for her constituents.

In March 1970, she gained a seat on the Committee on Organization, Study and Review which recommended reforms that were adopted by the Democratic Caucus in 1971. In the 92d through 94th Congresses she served on the Committee on Education and Labor. In the 95th through 97th Congresses she was a member of the influential Rules Committee.



(Photo by Shirley Washington)

Even in retirement Chisholm spends much of her time writing and lecturing.

For seven terms (1969-1983), Chisholm championed the social causes that had formed the heart of her career. She co-sponsored a bill calling for a 90-percent federal reimbursement of state welfare programs. As a member of the House consumer affairs study group, she co-sponsored a measure to establish a national commission on consumer protection and product safety. Chisholm proposed funding increases to extend the hours of child care facilities and services to include working mothers of low-income families. She was most proud of her bill passed into law in 1974 that extended minimum wage coverage to domestic workers for the first time. She also urged making Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday.

Throughout her Congressional career, Chisholm consistently opposed military expenditures and American overseas military involvements. She joined a bipartisan coalition of 15 Members in her first term to introduce legislation to end the draft and create an all-volunteer military. She supported the successful effort in 1971 to repeal Section II of the Internal Security Act of 1950 which required suspected subversives to be interned in emergency detention camps. She chaired the Congressional Black Caucus Task Force on Haitian Refugees. She also opposed apartheid (racial segregation) in South Africa and called for an end to British arm sales to that country.

Representative Shirley Chisholm made history again by seriously campaigning for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 1972. Her candidacy caused a split in the Congressional Black Caucus, especially among some of her male colleagues, one of whom referred to her as "that disruptive woman." At every step in her career, Chisholm had faced similar opposition from men who thought her ambitions unattainable because she was a woman. Moreover, her critics claimed Chisholm's candidacy diverted attention from "more important issues." But she was serious about confronting the status quo, and she supported Geraldine Ferraro and Jesse Jackson in subsequent bids for the presidential nomination.

As a legislator, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was completely devoted to the service of her constituents. She was unafraid to assert herself on behalf of her principles and the well-being of the people of her district, most especially, the children. She believed that politics should be a tool to effect change and to secure a better way of life for all Americans. Fundamentally, Chisholm was a teacher committed to opening up the democratic process to people unaccustomed to thinking of themselves as having power. Her electoral battles were always hard-fought and hard-won, but with a celebration of the human spirit.

Following her divorce from Conrad Chisholm in 1977, she married Arthur Hardwick, Jr., a New York state legislator. In 1982 Chisholm announced she would not seek reelection. Her decision was based on a variety of considerations, chief among them was her frustration with the rising tide of conservatism in Congress and the election of President Ronald Reagan. In addition, her second husband had been in a near fatal automobile accident and his health was failing. He died in 1986.

Celebrating "The Good Fight"

Since leaving Congress, Chisholm is still fighting "the good fight" as a teacher, lecturer, writer and activist. In 1983, she was appointed Purington Professor at Mt. Holyoke, a women's college in Massachusetts, where she taught politics and women's studies. She co-founded the National Political

Congress of Black Women, which sent a delegation of over 100 women to the 1988 Democratic National Convention. She participated in the 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns of Jesse Jackson because she shared many of his goals for the disadvantaged. President Clinton nominated her to become Ambassador to Jamaica, but she declined for health reasons. She spends much of her retirement writing, lecturing and teaching.

Chisholm has received more than 35 honorary doctoral degrees. She won more than 14 awards from national and international organizations such as the National Press Club, the United States Department of State and UNESCO. She was honored with the Woman of the Year award from Clairol in 1973 for outstanding achievement in public affairs.

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Helen Gahagan Douglas

(November, 25 1900-June 28 1980)
Democrat-California (14th District)
79th-81st Congresses (1945-1951)

(Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives, University of Oklahoma)

Senator Helen Gahagan Douglas.

Actress Turned Congresswoman

Helen Gahagan Douglas's life was shaped by two forces: the theater and politics. Long before she entered the Congress of the United States, she was an outstanding actress in the Broadway theater and an operatic singer of some note. Douglas was also a liberal New Deal Democrat who believed in the responsibility of government to attend to the social and economic needs of its citizens. The dire economic conditions brought on by the Great Depression made her liberal view of government a creditable solution.

Congresswoman Douglas was perhaps one of the earliest domestic political victims of the Cold War, made all the more vulnerable by being a woman. Her dedication to the ideals of fair play for all races, religions and classes, and to world peace through the United Nations, made her both a heroine to some and a target to others in the emotionally-charged atmosphere of the early Cold War.

The Broadway Actress

Nothing in her childhood would have foretold the kind of liberal politician Douglas turned out to be. Born on November, 25, 1900, at Boontoon, N.J., she was one of five children of Walter H. Gahagan and Lillian Rose Mussen Gahagan. Her father was an Ohio-born engineer who ran a thriving construction business in Brooklyn and a shipyard in Queens. Her mother had been a schoolteacher before she married. Helen Gahagan grew up in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn, which at the time was an upper middle-class residential area. She and her sister attended the Berkeley Institute, a private school for girls in Brooklyn, where she became interested in the theater.

Helen Gahagan was brought up in a conservative and religious family as a Republican and Episcopalian. Her father strongly opposed his daughter's interest in the theater; he preferred law, medicine or teaching as careers for women. He sent both daughters to an out-of-state boarding school in Northampton, Massachusetts. Upon graduation, Helen returned to New York and enrolled at Barnard College, the women's institution connected with Columbia University, where she renewed her interest in the theater.

Playwright and director Harry Wagstaff Gribble saw Helen in a college play and offered her a leading role in his Broadway play, *Shoot*. She took the part for the summer against her father's wishes. After

winning praise from the critics, she saw no reason to return and finish the last two years of her formal education. Her father was hurt by Helen's action; but after attending one of her performances on Broadway, he came to appreciate her talent. After *Shoot*, she appeared in a succession of hit shows throughout the 1920s.

At age 22, Helen Gahagan was a Broadway star hailed as one of the ten most beautiful women in the country. But the restless theatrical performer wanted something more. At the height of her fame, she cut herself off from the public for two years to study voice in preparation for operatic roles. Her voice coach worked on Helen's training for months before taking her on a concert tour to Italy, Austria and England in 1929.

When she returned to New York, Broadway producer David Belasco offered Helen the leading role in a play which required the leading lady to sing operatic material. She accepted the role even before a leading man had been selected. Belasco chose a handsome young actor named Melvyn Douglas, whom Helen rejected as too young after seeing his photograph. Belasco persuaded her to meet the actor in person; when she did, she became almost instantly enchanted with him. The play, *Tonight or Never*, opened on Broadway in 1930 to rave reviews. Helen Gahagan and Melvyn Douglas married on April 5, 1931, his 30th birthday. The marriage produced two children; a son, Peter, born in 1934, and a daughter, Mary Helen, born in 1938.

(Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives
University of Oklahoma)

Young Helen Gahagan grew up in a comfortable home in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn, New York.

Helen Gahagan Douglas (right) met her husband, fellow actor Melvyn Douglas, in the play Tonight or Never.

(Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives, University of Oklahoma)

A New Deal Democrat

Douglas attributed much of her interest in social justice to early incidents in her life. Her paternal grandmother, Hannah M. Gahagan, whose family had operated an underground railway station before the Civil War and who scandalized Troy, Ohio, by demanding that women be allowed to use the public library, instilled a healthy respect for human rights. But her adult political awakening came in two ways and almost all at once. The first was her sympathy with the underdog and the poor during the Great Depression. The second was the growing fascism and anti-semitism she encountered while traveling in Europe. Her sensitivity to anti-semitism was heightened by the fact that her husband was Jewish. When she returned to the United States, Douglas joined every anti-Nazi group she could find.

Hollywood, then an established motion picture center, offered Melvyn Douglas a promising future as an actor. Although Helen Douglas was at the top of her Broadway career, she willingly made the sacrifice for her husband's career and followed him to California.

On their trip to California, the couple encountered migrants from the Midwest along the way. Many were farmers moving west to escape disastrous "dust bowl" drought conditions. When the first Depression-era caravans of destitute farm families began to arrive in the late 1930s, Helen was shocked by the public's opposition. After the Douglases had settled in Hollywood, she performed relief work with the Farm Security Administration as the Depression deepened.

At that point politics became central in her life. She had the option of living as a comfortable suburban housewife and mother; but as she put it, "I realized that public affairs were also my affairs. I became active in politics because I saw the possibility, if we all sat back and did nothing, of a world in which there would no longer be any stages for actors to act on." The combination of the fascist threat and the plight of the Midwestern migrants turned her into a politician.

President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs to combat the Depression attracted Douglas's attention. In 1939 she was appointed to the National Advisory Committee of the Works Progress Administration. Her work with the National Youth Administration, the California Housing and Planning Association and other New Deal agencies eventually gained the attention of Eleanor Roosevelt and led to their subsequent friendship.

Douglas made many speeches in support of the Democratic national ticket in 1940, the year she was elected a Democratic National Committeewoman from California and a delegate to the national convention in Chicago. She captured party leaders' attention when she organized campaigns for pro-Roosevelt Congressional candidates.

Congressional Career

When Democratic Congressman Thomas F. Ford of California's 14th Congressional District refused the party's nomination in 1944, Douglas decided to run. She seemed the logical choice even though she was tagged a carpetbagger because her home was in an exclusive section of Hollywood outside the 14th Congressional District in downtown Los Angeles. Having already demonstrated her concern for the downtrodden, she sought to truly represent the district's diverse constituency, which included African Americans, Hispanics, Russian Jews, Asians and Italians.

Douglas was an enthusiastic candidate, optimistic about the future. Some opponents asked her why she wasn't home with the kids. She

replied that like housework, someone has to do politics; it only mattered how well it was done. She ran on the issues of equal rights, limited food subsidies, full respect for the rights of labor, protection for small businesses and farmers and taxation based on ability to pay.

Melvyn Douglas was serving in the Armed Forces in the China-Burma-India Theater in 1944. But with help from other movie stars and servicemen's wives, Helen Gahagan Douglas beat all seven of her male challengers in the party primary and won the November general election.

Congresswoman Douglas joined the United States House of Representatives in January 1945. Her assignment as a first-term Member to the prestigious Committee on Foreign Affairs was an unusual honor. On the committee, she supported the United Nations, the Marshall Plan, the Bretton Woods agreements and the independence of the Philippines and Israel.

Fiercely independent at times on foreign policy issues, she clashed with the Truman administration by opposing military aid to Greece and Turkey. She vigorously defended African-American soldiers against reckless charges by Representative John Rankin (D-MS) that they were responsible for widespread American fatalities in key battles during World War II. Douglas used Army and Navy records to prepare an extended address defending the military achievements of African-American soldiers.

Douglas alienated Rankin and other segregationists by being the first white Member to hire black staff, to appoint black constituents to West Point and to help desegregate dining facilities in the Capitol. These activities led Rankin to insinuate that she was a Communist sympathizer. Her response was an impassioned speech on the floor of the House called "My Democratic Credo," which asserted that demagoguery and false charges were a more serious threat to American democratic institutions than Communism.

Mindful of the threat to civil society of militarism, demagoguery and secrecy in government, Congresswoman Douglas made a determined

To dramatize the need for maintaining price controls, Douglas shops for groceries for her famous 1947 "Market Basket" speech.

(Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives, University of Oklahoma)

effort to keep atomic power out of the hands of the military. With Senator James O'Brien McMahon (D-CT), she prepared legislation placing atomic patents under civilian control. She readily recognized the new source of power for its peaceful uses rather than strictly military purposes. The Federation of Atomic Scientists called the resulting Atomic Energy Act of 1946 the most important legislation ever passed by Congress because civilian control would encourage private sector research. Republican Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce joined Douglas in supporting the civilian Atomic Energy Commission created by the law.

Douglas and Luce, though of opposing political parties, were constantly compared because of their similar backgrounds in terms of wealth, beauty, style and politically significant marriages. They agreed early in their Congressional careers not to engage in open competition because some members of the press were determined to provoke a confrontation between the nation's two most visible women politicians. Douglas and Luce often took very different political positions, but they resisted all attempts to provoke a conflict between them.

Domestic affairs and New Deal social legislation formed the focus of Douglas's legislative agenda. She was at her show business best when she strolled on the floor of the House with a basket full of groceries and gave her famous 1947 "Market Basket" speech in defense of maintaining price controls to benefit working people. She also fought for rent control, slum clearance, middle-class housing, expanded Social Security coverage, an increased minimum wage and funding for cancer research.

An Unplanned Retirement

In 1950 Douglas decided to give up her relatively safe seat in the House of Representatives to run for the Senate. Her Republican opponent, Richard Nixon, Congressman from an adjacent district, took advantage of the fear of Communism to charge that Douglas was pro-Communist. Accusing her of being a Communist sympathizer, or "fellow traveler," Nixon dubbed her "the pink lady." Nixon's attacks put Douglas on the defensive. The allegations produced the desired result; Douglas lost the race.

In 1963, Douglas published a book on her favorite heroine, *The Eleanor We Remember*, about former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. She returned to the theater and starred in the Broadway production of *First Lady* and a few other plays. In 1972 she made her last foray into politics when she campaigned for Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern.

Helen Gahagan Douglas adhered to her high ideals and political beliefs in spite of attacks on her patriotism. A fighter to the end for issues she considered important, Douglas spoke to a Congressional hearing by telephone from her sickbed about the importance of continuing cancer research. She died of the disease shortly afterwards on June 28, 1980, in Manhattan.

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Millicent Vernon Hammond Fenwick

(February 25, 1910-September 16, 1992)
Republican-New Jersey (Fifth District)
94th-97th Congresses (1975-1983)

(AP)

Congresswoman Millicent Fenwick.

The Conscience of the House

Millicent Fenwick was known for her sharp tongue and brilliant wit which she used on behalf of ordinary citizens to pursue fairness in the political system. The four-term New Jersey Congresswoman's willingness to speak her mind and vote her conscience earned her a national reputation as an honest politician, so much so that she served as the model for the fictional Congresswoman in the popular *Doonesbury* cartoon series. Although Fenwick maintained a somewhat humorous image as a pipe-smoking eccentric, she was a tough legislator and an unabashed supporter of women's rights, even when it caused discomfort for some of her male colleagues.

A Patrician Background

Born Millicent Vernon Hammond on February 25, 1910, in New York City, she was one of three children of Ogden Haggerty Hammond and Mary Picton Stevens Hammond. Her father was a financier and businessman who served two terms as a Republican in the New Jersey House of Representatives. Her mother came from the prominent family of American Revolutionary War hero, Colonel John Stevens. Tragically, Fenwick's mother died when the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German torpedo off the coast of Ireland in 1915.

Fenwick attended the fashionable Foxcroft Elementary School in Middleburg, Virginia, from 1923 until her father was named American ambassador to Spain in 1925. She accompanied her father and stepmother to Madrid where she became fluent not only in Spanish, but also in French and Italian. When her father's diplomatic service ended in 1929, the family returned to New York where she attended Columbia University and the New School for Social Research. Millicent married Hugh Fenwick in 1934 and they divorced in 1938. The brief marriage produced two children, Hugh and Mary.

The Great Depression of the 1930s dramatically decreased her family's wealth. The dividends from her mother's estate dwindled. With two small children to raise and a husband who was better at spending money than earning an income, she resolved not to ask her family for help, but to find work on her own. A friend helped her obtain a job at *Vogue*, a magazine owned by Conde Nast Publications. She later became its associate editor in 1938 and remained at the magazine for 14 years. In 1948, Fenwick authored a 600-page treatise on proper behavior entitled,

Vogue's Book of Etiquette. In 1952, she quit her editorial position when the income from her mother's estate had recovered to the point that it left her free to pursue her interest in public affairs.

Combating Fascism

Fenwick claimed she never really cared for politics, but the rise of Adolf Hitler jolted her out of that frame of mind. She was shocked that the German people, whom she considered intelligent and literate, could follow a man with such a vile philosophy. Her response to fascism was to join the National Conference of Christians and Jews in order to combat any such poisonous propaganda in the United States. It was in that context that she began to speak out publicly for the first time in her life.

Like many American women who enter politics, Fenwick first became politically involved on her local school board. She served on the Bernardsville (NJ) Board of Education from 1938 to 1941. Over a decade later, she moved into serious politics by working in the 1954 campaign of Republican candidate Clifford P. Case for the United States Senate. She then chaired the Somerset County Legal Aid Society and the Bernardsville Recreation Commission. She was also the first woman member of the Bernardsville Borough Council (from 1958 to 1964). She was vice-chairman of the New Jersey Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1958 to 1972. In 1970, Fenwick won a seat in the New Jersey General Assembly as a Republican.

Fenwick served in the New Jersey Legislature with distinction, establishing a strong reputation as an effective voice for civil rights, consumer interests, prison reform and conservation. Governor William T. Cahill was impressed enough to appoint her head of a new state agency as director of New Jersey Consumer Affairs.

In the early spring of 1974, Peter Frelinghuysen, who had represented New Jersey's Fifth Congressional District for 22 years, announced his retirement. A longtime friend, he shared a similar social and economic background with Fenwick. But it was John Davies, a columnist for the *Camden News* and a personal friend, who thought Fenwick would make an excellent successor to Frelinghuysen. Although she thought that at her age (64) some might think her too old, she quit her consumer affairs position in order to concentrate on the tough job of seeking the Republican nomination. She defeated her main opponent, 38-year-old Thomas H. Kean, a fellow member of the New Jersey General Assembly and later governor of the state. In the November general elections, she defeated Democratic opponent Frederick M. Bohen by a margin of 81,498 to 66,380 votes.

(photo by Horst, *Vogue* magazine)

While working for Vogue, Fenwick occasionally modeled for the magazine.

Congressional Career

Millicent Fenwick was sworn in on January 14, 1975, as a Member of the 94th Congress from New Jersey's Fifth District. She was the first woman ever to enter the House of Representatives at such an advanced age—and perhaps the only Member of Congress ever to write a book on good behavior.

At first glance, some of her critics thought Fenwick had all the characteristics of someone not likely to create any kind of fuss: wealthy, aging and well-mannered. Nothing could have been further from the truth. She possessed broad political and social interests, chief among them civil and human rights, women's rights and consumer protection.

(AP)

Reporters found Fenwick to be a colorful and outspoken personality.

In her first term, Fenwick was assigned to the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Banking, Currency and Housing. She embraced her work on behalf of small business: "I love Small Business . . . Small Business is what it's all about, really."

Fenwick also sought a seat on the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the basis that the Member she replaced, Frelinghuysen, had served on the committee. Her cosmopolitan background and her fluency in languages, however, failed to convince the Republican Committee on Committees. In her second term, she sought the seat again, and was again passed over. It was not until her third term that she was appointed to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Fenwick also served on the Committee on Education and Labor and the Select Committee on Aging. She served on the Ethics Committee during the so-called Koreagate Scandal which led to an investigation of Korean leader Tongsun Park's attempts to influence Members of Congress. Representative Fenwick supported reforms that required Members to file financial disclosure statements and limit their outside earnings.

Noting that "the business of government is justice," Fenwick came to be regarded as the conscience of the House by continually speaking in terms of honor, duty, integrity and the public trust. Her lectures irritated some of her influential male colleagues. At one point, Wayne Hays (D-OH), powerful Chairman of the House Administration Committee, threatened to withhold her staff's paychecks, "if that woman doesn't sit down and keep quiet." Hays resigned from Congress in 1976 facing allegations of financial improprieties.

Fenwick was a hard person to pin down philosophically. Although she was a Republican by background, she often supported positions at odds with her party. The liberal Americans for Democratic Action in 1978 gave her a rating of 85 percent, the highest rating awarded to any Republican in Congress that year. At the Republican National Convention in August of 1976, she served on the Women's Task Force supporting ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). She debated one of ERA's chief opponents, Phyllis Schlafly, on television. Fenwick later recalled, "I came as close to losing my temper as I ever had on TV and I said, 'Mrs. Schlafly, what you're saying is not true and I'm afraid you know it.'" On other controversial social issues, she supported federal funding of abortions and opposed cuts in the food stamp program.

Doonesbury
BY GARRY TRUDEAU
HELLO, MY NAME'S LACEY DAVENPORT, AND I'M SIMPLY THRILLED TO PIECES TO BE HERE CAMPAIGNING FOR MY FELLOW REPUBLICAN, CLINT EASTWOOD!
CLINT
TO BE HONEST, I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE OF MR. EASTWOOD'S FILMS, BUT I'M SURE HE'S JUST DELICIOUS IN THEM. I'M TOLD HE PROJECTS RE- JLVE, AND THAT'S IMPORTANT!
CLINT
AFTER ALL, WHAT'S THE GREATEST PROBLEM FACING MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS TODAY?
CLINT
PUNKS.
UH.. NO, DEFICITS. OH, DEAR, IS THIS A LAW AND ORDER CAMPAIGN?
CLINT

Fenwick served as the prototype for the fictional Congresswoman Lacy Davenport in the Doonesbury comic strip.

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

In her efforts to protect working people, Fenwick sponsored a measure requiring banks to pay consumers' legal fees if the bank did not correctly estimate the final cost of a lease. She introduced an amendment under the Fair Credit Billing Act rendering the advisory opinions of federal agencies legally binding to protect small businessmen who must rely on those interpretations of the law. She also proposed an amendment exempting small banks from certain costly record-keeping procedures. She also worked to eliminate the income tax provisions that penalized working couples.

On international issues, Representative Fenwick worked diligently to establish the Helsinki Commission on Human Rights to improve human rights behind the Iron Curtain. She wrote the bill creating the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe to monitor the Helsinki agreement. Also in line with both her international and feminist concerns, she introduced legislation to create an International Women's Year to be observed worldwide under the auspices of the United Nations. The grand celebration focused attention on the political status of women around the globe.

A Run for the Senate

In 1982, Millicent Fenwick decided to run for the Senate. She failed in the effort in part because she refused to accept contributions from political action committees. As a result, her Democratic opponent outspent her by two million dollars. Even so, she was barely defeated. Since she had to give up her House seat in order to run for the Senate, the loss brought an end to her distinguished service in the House of Representatives.

In 1983, she was named ambassador to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome where she served with distinction. Before retiring in 1987, she spent four years in the post helping to feed the hungry in developing countries.

Representative Millicent Fenwick was greatly admired for her service as a diligent, principled and productive public servant. When asked how she wanted her years of service to be remembered, she replied, "I suppose the hope of furthering justice is really my main thing. . . . I think about my town, my district, my state, my country, my planet, and then I think we're all in this together and somehow we've got to try to work out a just and a peaceful society." Congresswoman Fenwick did her part in trying to bring about justice in the world.

Even though Millicent Fenwick spent the last five years of her life in retirement, she continued to speak out against injustice. She died peacefully on September 16, 1992, at her home in Bernardsville, New Jersey, at the age of 82.

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Geraldine Anne Ferraro

(August 26, 1935-)
Democrat-New York (Ninth District)
96th-98th Congresses, 1979-1985

(Courtesy Keck, Mahin & Cat)

Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro.

Symbol of Women's Political Leadership

Geraldine Ferraro made history. As the Democratic Party's vice-presidential nominee in 1984, she became an instant role model for women seeking political office. She was a consummate politician and a skilled campaigner who dared run for the nation's second highest elective office with confidence and self-assurance.

"Gerry," as Ferraro came to be known, established a number of firsts. She was the first woman nominated by a major political party to be part of a presidential ticket; the first American of Italian heritage to be nominated at the highest levels of political leadership; and the first woman to chair the platform committee of a major political party. All of these achievements were made possible by her first being elected to the United States House of Representatives.

Learning to Plan and to Persevere

Born on August 26, 1935, in Newburgh, New York, Geraldine Ferraro was the fourth child and the only daughter of Dominick and Antonetta L. Corrieri Ferraro. Her Italian immigrant father owned a thriving restaurant and a five-and-dime store. Geraldine was the baby girl in a family of boys and she was loved and pampered as such. But of her three siblings, only one brother, Carl, survived. His twin brother died when he was six days old. Geraldine's second brother, Gerard, after whom she was named, was killed in a car accident in her mother's arms. Her father had a fatal heart attack when Geraldine was eight years old, leaving her, Carl and their mother alone. After her mother lost the family businesses and was forced to find work crocheting beads on dresses to support her children, the family moved to a low-income area in the South Bronx to be near other family members.

As a very young girl, Geraldine Ferraro learned about the fragility of life. She later recalled the impact her father's death had on the family and her own determination to succeed: "My father's death changed my life forever. I found out how quickly what you have can be taken away. From that moment on, I had to fight for whatever I wanted, to work and study my own way out of the South Bronx and take my mother with me. For every plan I made, I made sure I had an alternative to fall back on. I had learned that the hard way, and so had my mother."

Antonetta Ferraro managed to get her bright daughter enrolled in a prestigious Catholic school in Tarrytown, New York, from which she

graduated in 1952. Geraldine Ferraro was an excellent student and won a scholarship to Marymount College in Manhattan. While in college, she edited the school newspaper and briefly considered becoming a journalist. She graduated in 1956 with a B.A. in English. While teaching grade school in Queens, where the family eventually moved, she attended night classes at Fordham University Law School and received a J.D. degree in 1960. She also passed the bar exam that year. On July 16, 1960, she married John Zaccaro, a longtime family friend and a successful Manhattan real-estate developer.

The newlyweds settled in a comfortable home in Forest Hills, an affluent Queens subdivision, where Geraldine Ferraro could devote her time to raising a family before pursuing her own career. She spent fourteen years as a homemaker raising two girls and a boy; but she also worked occasionally as a part-time lawyer for her husband's business interests and for other clients. Local Democratic clubs provided an outlet for her political interests and an opportunity to keep in touch with her profession. She helped in a number of local campaigns including cousin Nicholas Ferraro's successful bid for the New York State Senate. She developed ties with civic groups, schools and churches which would prove useful later in her own political career in Queens. While always a practicing Roman Catholic, Ferraro adopted a pro-choice position on abortion and reproductive rights for all women.

(Courtesy of Geraldine Ferraro)

Ferraro has always been outgoing, even at 18 months old.

From Assistant District Attorney to Member of Congress

After Nicholas Ferraro became district attorney for Queens he helped her obtain an appointment as an assistant district attorney in the Investigations Bureau in 1974. She began working in 1975 with a unit she helped to create, the Special Victims Bureau where she prosecuted cases involving rape, child and spousal abuse and domestic violence. Although she was praised as a tough prosecutor, the plight of the victims depressed her. She concluded that poverty and social injustice lay at the bottom of most of the crime with which she dealt. This conclusion transformed her priorities from criminal prosecution to crime prevention. Her work as a prosecutor also provided Ferraro with her first taste of gender pay inequity. Her male colleagues earned more, it was argued, because she was a married woman and needed less. Both of these discoveries encouraged her to move on to the political arena.

When Representative James J. Delaney of the Ninth District of New York announced his retirement, Ferraro immediately made plans to run for the seat. With a reputation for toughness on crime, her campaign strategy was fairly straightforward—support for law and order, assistance for the elderly and neighborhood preservation. She won the three-way Democratic primary with 53 percent of the vote and went on to win the general election by defeating her Republican opponent by a ten-percent margin.

"Just One of the Guys"

Geraldine Ferraro took the oath of office in the United States House of Representatives in January 1979. Her committee assignments were fairly low-keyed to conform with the lowly status of a freshman Member. Her first assignments were on the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service where she fulfilled a campaign pledge to get a new zip code for her district and on the Committee on Public Works and Transportation where

(Courtesy of Geraldine Ferraro)

Gerry looks on with admiration as her older brother Carl graduates from high school in 1946.

she sought increased funding for mass transit in congested areas in her district. She quickly became known as a hard worker and a bright beginner.

Democratic leaders appreciated Ferraro's hard work and rewarded her for it. House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill regarded her as "just one of the guys." As her political mentor, O'Neill was enormously helpful to Ferraro's Congressional career. With his help, she was elected secretary of the Democratic Caucus in 1980 and 1982, which allowed her to sit on the House Steering and Policy Committee. She also gained a seat on the highly influential Budget Committee and established good working relations with its chairman, Representative William H. Gray III, Democrat of Pennsylvania.

Like many of her Democratic colleagues, Ferraro opposed the cuts to social programs sought by the Republican administration of President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, yet she did not hesitate to vote with the Republicans on some issues that were most important to her constituents. Her pragmatism was based on the knowledge that if she wanted to continue representing her mainly Catholic and conservative working-class district, she was required to vote against mandatory busing, for tuition tax credits for private and parochial schools and for aid to Israel.

But her district also tolerated her feminist stand on equal pay for equal work for women. Ferraro co-sponsored the Economic Equity Act in 1981 which was designed to accomplish many of the aims of the defeated Equal Rights Amendment. The law allowed widows and divorcees to share in their husbands' pensions accumulated during marriage and raised the amount a woman can deposit in a joint Individual Retirement Account. She was a leader in the call for government funding of abortion.

While liberal on many social issues, Ferraro supported anti-crime legislation and a strong national defense. She voted in favor of the Pershing II Missile and the Trident submarine, but against the B-1 bomber, nerve gas and the Star War proposals of President Reagan.

The First Woman Vice Presidential Candidate

1984 was Ferraro's banner year. With the aid of Speaker O'Neill, she was named chair of the Democratic Platform Committee which brought her instant media attention. It also allowed her to influence the convention. Ferraro won praise for the strategy she adopted of permitting various

The first woman vice-presidential candidate, Ferraro campaigned long and hard for the Democratic ticket headed by presidential candidate Walter Mondale.

(AP)

constituent groups to have a voice in writing the platform. She was also approached by a group of influential professional women about her willingness to be a candidate for vice president if they were able to convince the leading nominees for the presidency to put a woman on the ticket. She agreed and the campaign was on within the party to nominate a woman for vice president to counterbalance the enormous popularity of incumbent Republican President Ronald Reagan.

It was widely believed at the time that President Reagan was unpopular with women voters—the so-called gender gap. To appeal to women voters, Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale announced on July 12, 1984, that Ferraro would be his running mate. The news was greeted with wild enthusiasm at the convention and among many women's groups. On October 11, 1984, Ferraro held her own in a televised debate with incumbent Vice President George Bush. The campaign was hard fought, but in the end the Mondale-Ferraro ticket won only 41 percent of the popular vote in the nation as a whole, carrying only Minnesota and the District of Columbia.

In post-mortems on the 1984 election, some said that Ferraro was hurt by her husband's well-publicized tax problems. Other critics said it was not so much his problems as the defensive way Ferraro responded to criticism. In any event, the gender gap never materialized.

The post-election period was a somber one for Geraldine Ferraro. So many problems had emerged as a result of her run for high office, not the least of which were her husband's tax problems. The matter dogged the campaign almost from the start. It was ultimately resolved when John Zaccaro pled guilty to a misdemeanor. The Justice Department cleared her of tax return infractions, but not before she had to give up the idea of running for the United States Senate against Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) in 1986. Her son later was arrested and convicted on cocaine possession while attending college in Vermont. Through it all, Ferraro maintained the inner strength that made her such a superb role model for many women.

In 1988 Ferraro was invited to be a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. It seemed like the preparation for a comeback. In 1992, the so-called "Year of the Woman," Ferraro finally ran for the Senate. The Democratic Convention featured the party's many women candidates and greeted Ferraro's presence among them with enthusiasm; however, she later lost the state primary in a bitter three-way race.

With the 1992 election of Democrat Bill Clinton as President, Ferraro was appointed chief of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Human Rights Convention in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 1994, Geraldine Ferraro was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, in Seneca Falls, New York, home of the 19th century origins of the women's rights movement and the struggle for women's suffrage. Her vice presidential candidacy, just ten years before, went a long way toward vindicating the brave efforts of the pioneers for women's rights. Women not only had won the right to vote but also the right to seek the highest offices in the land. Ferraro regarded her campaign as opening another door for women and she was honored to have played a role in that part of American history.

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Ella Tambussi Grasso

(May 10, 1919-February 5, 1981)
Democrat-Connecticut (Sixth District)
92d-93d Congresses (1971-1975)

(Library of Congress)

Congresswoman Ella Grasso.

From Immigrant Family To Governor

Ella Grasso was the first woman in the United States to be elected governor in her own right. She won the governorship of Connecticut in 1974 triumphing over bumper stickers put out by her opponent's supporters that asked the provocative question, "Can Connecticut afford a governess?" That she won testified to her political skills, previously in evidence as a two-term Member of the United States House of Representatives.

A Child of Immigrants

Ella Rosa Giovanna Oliva Tambussi was born on May 10, 1919, in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, the only child of Italian immigrant parents. Her father, Giacomo Tambussi, was a baker while her mother, Maria Oliva, was a strong advocate of education; both parents had emigrated from the Piedmont section of Italy and settled in an immigrant neighborhood in Windsor Locks.

Because of her scholastic achievement at St. Mary's Parochial School, Ella Tambussi won a scholarship to the elite Chaffee School in Windsor Locks for her college preparatory studies. She later enrolled at Mount Holyoke, a women's college in South Hadley, Massachusetts, where she majored in sociology and economics. She earned a bachelor of arts degree from the college in 1940, won election to Phi Beta Kappa and graduated with honors. She then became a graduate student at Mount Holyoke while working as a departmental assistant and a laboratory instructor in statistics. She earned a master's degree in 1942.

Soon after Ella Tambussi finished graduate school, she married schoolteacher Thomas Grasso on August 31, 1942. He eventually became a school principal. They had two children, James and Suzanne, who also became teachers.

Grasso's first job after graduation was as Assistant Director of Resources for the War Manpower Commission of Connecticut during the Second World War. In 1943, she joined the League of Women Voters, which helped her to formulate programs, learn legislative procedures and develop an understanding of the issues. She later recalled why she went into government, "I realized that if I was concerned with problems, the best way of getting them solved was to be part of the decision-making process."

Grasso also recalled her experiences growing up in an Italian neighborhood: "Living in a community like that, you don't have to worry

about your roots. They're there. Solid." The working-class nature of her background helped Grasso maintain a career while also having a family. Her extended family surroundings later allowed Grasso to enter politics assured that the welfare of her two small children would not be neglected.

Entering Democratic Party Politics

Her working class background probably influenced Grasso's decision to join the Democratic Party in Connecticut. She wrote speeches and solicited votes for Democratic candidates. Later she ran for a seat in the Connecticut General Assembly and won two terms in 1952 and 1954. She was elected Secretary of State of Connecticut in 1958 and served twelve years in that post. She was also a Democratic committeewoman from 1956 to 1958, a member of the platform committee in 1960 and co-chairman of the Resolutions Committees for the Democratic National Conventions in Atlantic City in 1964 and Chicago in 1968.

By 1968 Grasso had come to the attention of John Bailey, a nationally powerful state Democratic chairman, who became her political mentor. As chairman of the Democratic Party, he made the decision to encourage more women to seek office in the Congress of the United States.

Two years after the 1968 Democratic Convention, the party needed a candidate to run for Congress from the newly-created Sixth District in Connecticut. With Bailey's encouragement, the party thought that Ella Grasso was the right person for the job. At first she hesitated for personal reasons. Her husband was recovering from a heart attack, her daughter had been in a near-fatal car accident and her son was in his critical teenage years, but most of all she believed in the importance of state government.

Once she entered the campaign, Grasso faced a tough challenger in Republican candidate Richard C. Kilbourn, who referred to her as "Spender-Ella," citing her voting record favoring government spending to "help the unhelpable." She avoided referring to her opponent by campaigning on the issues of inflation, unemployment and favoring military withdrawal from Vietnam. Grasso won 51.1 percent of the vote and defeated Kilbourn by only 4,000 votes out of the nearly 200,000 votes cast. She won subsequent elections by wider margins.

Serving Her Constituents in Congress

On January 3, 1971, Ella Grasso was sworn in as a Member of the 92d Congress. She was fortunate to be assigned to committees that fit her interests. She had seats on the Education and Labor Committee and on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Because unemployment in her district was high due to cutbacks in the defense industry, she became a leader of the Congressional forces pushing for the Emergency Employment Act of 1971.

Congresswoman Grasso also sponsored the Education Act of 1971 and the Fair Labor Standards Amendments of 1971, which increased the minimum wage and extended benefits to six million workers not previously covered. She also sponsored the Higher Education Act of 1972. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of her two terms in Congress was her part in drafting the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. In general, she sponsored measures to increase educational and other benefits for veterans and Social Security, medical and other benefits for the elderly.

(Continued on page 41)

(U.S. Capitol Historical Society)

Congresswomen Ella Grasso, Leonor K. Sullivan, Martha W. Griffiths, Margaret Heckler and Bella Abzug (left to right) gather in the Congresswomen's Suite in the Capitol in 1972.

FROM THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN, TO THE INSIDE LOOKING OUT:

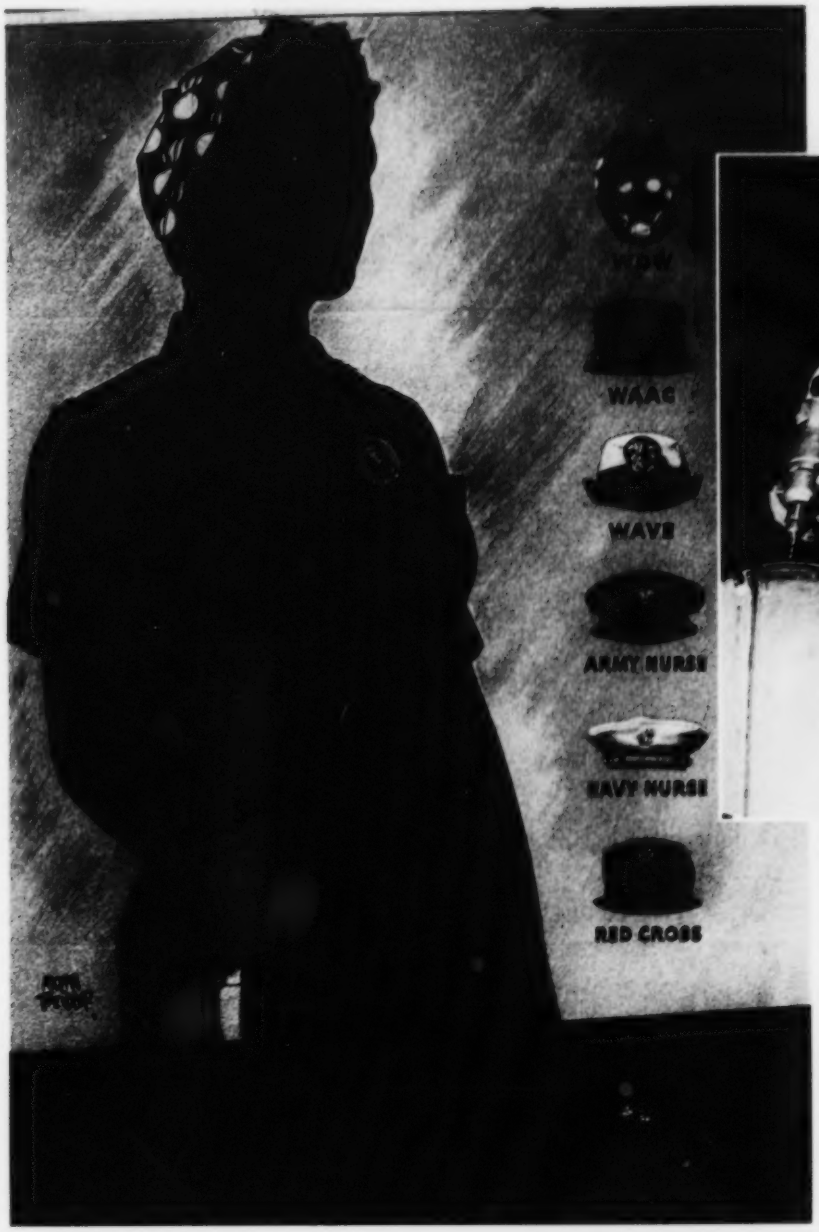
THE PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN POLITICS

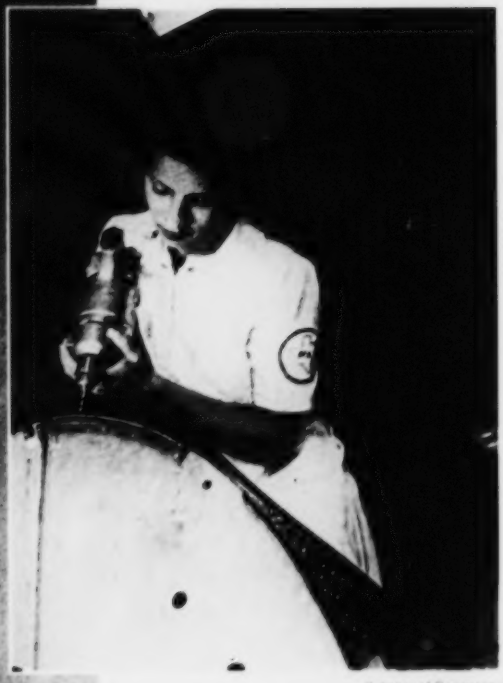
Program for 1913 women's suffrage parade in Washington, D.C.. The movement for women's suffrage began in earnest in 1848 when Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and other women met in Seneca Falls, N.Y., and adopted a resolution calling for the right of women to vote.

© Library of Congress

Works Progress Administration Guide to California: New Deal programs in the 1930s provided not only work for women, but also inspiration to enter government service. Future Member of Congress Helen Gahagan Douglas first entered politics as a member of the National Advisory Committee of the Works Progress Administration.

(Library of Congress)





(Library of Congress)

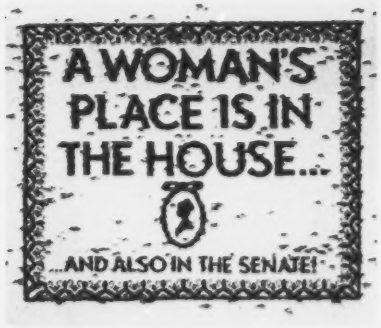
She's A WOW!: World War II poster honors the woman ordinance worker, referred to colorfully as "Rosie the Riveter," such as the worker seen riveting an aircraft tail assembly. World War II swelled the ranks of women in the workforce. Margaret Chase Smith, Clare Boothe Luce and other women Members of Congress took an active interest in the status and contributions of women to the war effort.

(Courtesy of Lynn Martin)

Lynn Martin of Illinois makes nominating speech for presidential candidate George Bush at the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas. Martin later served as Secretary of Labor in President Bush's Cabinet.

(UPI Bettmann)

The first woman nominated for Vice President by a major political party, Geraldine Ferraro campaigns with Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale in 1984. Her candidacy, she wrote, "touched a nerve" with women across the nation.



(Library of Congress)

"A Woman's Place is in the House . . . and also in the Senate!" This catchy phrase appeared on posters, such as this one, and on bumper stickers during the 1970s and 1980s. By 1995, 154 women had served in the House of Representatives and 24 women had served in the Senate. Four of these women (Margaret Chase Smith, Barbara Mikulski, Barbara Boxer and Olympia J. Snowe) have served in both the House and the Senate.

(United States Capitol Historical Society)

Bronze statue of Jeannette Rankin by Teresa Mimnaugh was unveiled in the Capitol in 1985 as the second statue donated by Montana to the National Statuary Hall Collection. The statue's placement memorialized the fact that women are now very much at home in the national corridors of power, thanks to the pioneering efforts of women Members of Congress such as Rankin, Margaret Chase Smith and all the others.

Marilyn Lloyd, Virginia Smith gather in the C is now known Reading Room

Congresswoman Lindy Boggs presides over the July 16, 1987, ceremonial joint session of Congress in Philadelphia's Independence Hall to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. She also chaired the Commission on the Bicentenary of the U.S. House of Representatives.

(United States Capitol Historical Society)

Marilyn Lloyd, Martha Keys, Patricia Schroeder, Margaret Heckler, Virginia Smith, Helen S. Meyner and Marjorie S. Holt (left to right) gather in the Congresswomen's Suite in the Capitol in 1978. The room is now known as the Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Women's Reading Room.

(Senate Historical Office)

Although she had served her constituents and her party effectively, national politics never engaged Grasso the way Connecticut politics had. She was anxious to return to her home state.

Her Honor, The Governor

Grasso decided to run for governor of Connecticut in January of 1974. She beat the other Democratic candidates in the primary in the spring of 1974 and was nominated by acclamation at the Connecticut Democratic Convention on July 20, 1974. She ran against Republican Congressman Robert H. Steele in the general election and defeated him at the polls on November 5, 1974. She was sworn in as Connecticut's 83d governor on January 8, 1975.

Grasso did not seem to realize the significance of her victory as the first women ever elected governor on her own right; she had more pride in being an Italian American who had risen to such a position. It was not until the national press covered the gubernatorial campaign that she began to think that she was doing something out of the ordinary for a woman.

Governor Grasso announces her state budget in 1980 accompanied by House Speaker Ernest Abate (left) and Lt. Gov. William O'Neill (right).

(AP)

Throughout her career, she avoided involvement in the feminist movement. While she readily acknowledged that the movement made her quest for office easier, she did not feel a part of the women's movement nor was she beholden to it. She named few women to her administration but then puzzled feminists with such comments as, "I don't give any quarter and I don't expect any as a woman. I expect to be treated as a person, and I usually am."

As governor, Grasso reduced state spending in order to hold down taxes and to avoid the imposition of a state income tax. She even returned her own pay raise as a symbolic gesture to indicate the need to control expenditures. She won reelection in 1978; but failing health prevented her from completing a second term.

Resignation and Death

Grasso resigned from the governorship of Connecticut due to illness on December 31, 1980. She had undergone surgery for ovarian cancer and in late November was hospitalized with phlebitis when doctors found that the cancer had spread to her intestinal tract. She died in Hartford on February 5, 1981. Former President Jimmy Carter praised her "truly outstanding service to the people of Connecticut, the Democratic Party and the nation."

Ella Grasso's election as governor of Connecticut, based on her ability to project herself as a worthy leader, was a great inspiration to American women aspiring to the highest levels of government leadership. Her career and early death raises the tantalizing question of what might have been? Were it not for her untimely death, at an age when most leaders are at the peak of their capacity, who knows how far Ella Grasso could have gone.

Given subsequent history and the 1984 vice-presidential candidacy of Geraldine Ferraro, one can only speculate. Certainly, Grasso possessed many of the intangible qualities that often characterize American presidential candidates. She was a proven vote-getter from an industrialized state, a devoted wife and mother, and a hard-working moderate in her party with strong family values and no hint of scandal. A potential negative to more liberal Democrats might have been her firm but quiet opposition to abortion because of her Catholic faith. Had she lived longer, Grasso may very well have been the first woman president or vice-president. Unfortunately, no one will ever know what might have been.

In her short but important career, Grasso earned numerous awards. *Time* magazine named her one of twelve women of the year in 1975 and the *Ladies Home Journal* named her woman of the year in 1976. She was honored with the Silver Apple Award of the Connecticut Education Association and the Knight of Order of Merit of the Italian Republic. She earned honorary doctorates from Mount Holyoke, Smith College and Sacred Heart University. In 1993, Grasso was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame at Seneca Falls, New York.

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Margaret Mary Heckler

(June 21, 1931-)
Republican-Massachusetts (Tenth District)
90th-97th Congresses (1967-1983)

(Library of Congress)

Congresswoman Margaret Heckler.

Congresswoman, Cabinet Member and Ambassador

Margaret Heckler provides the spirited example of an achieving woman willing to take on the challenges of important posts not routinely open to members of her gender. She persevered and succeeded in spite of the restraints society placed upon women.

Heckler studied law and became a fine attorney at a time when few women ventured into that profession. She became the first woman from her state to be elected to Congress on her own merit (not as a widow-successor) at a time when few women were elected to that male-dominated institution. She was a cabinet member in an administration that some feminists attacked as unfriendly to women's issues. But she was named an ambassador when there were still few women in that role.

To many of her contemporaries, Heckler seemed almost a wonder woman—an ambitious, competent and strong feminist who was also a political moderate and a successful working wife and mother. Much of her success came from her willingness to work hard.

Learning Law and Politics

Born Margaret Mary O'Shaughnessy on June 21, 1931, in Flushing, New York, she was the only child of John O'Shaughnessy and Bridget (McKeon) O'Shaughnessy, both Irish Catholic immigrants. Her father was a doorman at a New York City hotel. Margaret was raised in Flushing, but she went away to college in New Haven, Connecticut, at Albert Magnus College, a small Roman Catholic institution for women. After studying at the University of Leiden in The Netherlands in 1952, she earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science from Albert Magnus College in 1953. She entered Boston College Law School where, in spite of being the only woman in her class, she was the editor of the law review. She graduated sixth in the class with a law degree in 1956. She passed the Massachusetts bar and earned credentials to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court in the same year.

The legal profession appealed to Margaret Mary O'Shaughnessy because she believed she could use her legal experience in public service. She and some friends from law school set up their own legal office in Boston. In her spare time she worked as a volunteer for various Republican candidates seeking political office.

Politics held a strong attraction since her days in college when she ran for the speakership of the student legislature, an office never before

held by a woman. After she won she recalled thinking, "up to that time all I had ever dreamed about was being a concert pianist, but after John Heckler helped me win, I knew I wanted to go into government through law." She married Heckler in the Roman Catholic Church on August 29, 1953. Three talented offspring were produced by that marriage: Belinda, a writer; Allison, a composer and musician; and John Jr., a stock broker.

Unseating a Legend

Heckler won election to the U.S. Congress by defeating a venerable Republican leader who had been in the House of Representatives for over 40 years. Before running for Congress, Heckler was a representative on the Wellesley, Massachusetts, Republican Town Committee from 1958 to 1966. She also served two terms as a member of the Massachusetts Governor's Council from 1962 to 1964. When the powers of the council were reduced because of a scandal, Heckler considered seeking another position. She decided to challenge 81-year-old incumbent Congressman Joseph W. Martin, Jr. It was a mighty challenge; Martin had been a Member of Congress since 1925, House Republican Minority Leader for 16 years and Speaker of the House for four years (1947-49 and 1953-55).

In order to achieve maximum exposure, Heckler spoke everywhere she had the chance—in cafes, at factory gates and in shopping malls. She campaigned on the district's need for energetic, continuous and full-time representation by citing the fact that Martin had only attended 49 percent of the House sessions during the last Congress. To bolster her campaign, she used one of Martin's own 1924 campaign speeches in which he stated, "A Congressional seat is a position for one in vigorous health if the people are to be adequately served." Heckler won the primary contest by 3,200 votes. She later won the general election against Democratic challenger Patrick H. Harrington, Jr., a labor lawyer, by taking 51.1 percent of the votes cast. She credited her victory to the staunch support of women's groups.

(UPI/Bettmann)

V for Victory: Margaret Heckler upset 42-year incumbent Joseph Martin in the 1966 Republican primary in Massachusetts.

Congressional Career

On January 3, 1967, Heckler was sworn into the 90th Congress and took her seat in the United States House of Representatives. Her committee assignments were varied and appropriate to her interests and the concerns of her constituents. She began by serving on the Committee on Government Operations in the 90th Congress and on the Banking and Currency Committee from the 91st through the 93d Congresses. She campaigned hard for a seat on the Committee on Agriculture on which she served from the 94th through 96th Congresses, as well as on the Committee on Science and Technology in the 97th Congress and the Select Committee on Ethics in the 96th Congress. Heckler also served on the prestigious House-Senate Joint Economic Committee in the 94th, 96th and 97th Congresses.

In addition to her committee assignments, Congresswoman Heckler's legislative activities often had a distinct feminist flavor. She proposed an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution and co-sponsored an October 1977 joint resolution to extend the deadline for its ratification. She pushed for a bill to set up a national center for the prevention and control of rape, to establish shelters for battered wives and other victims of domestic violence and to protect pension rights for working women on maternity leave. Heckler also introduced an amend-

(UPI/ Bettmann)

President Ronald Reagan (center) enters the East Room of the White House in 1983 to announce the appointment of Heckler (right) to replace outgoing Health and Human Services Secretary Richard Schweiker (left).

ment to the Small Business Act creating the position of small business advocate to help both women and men go into business for themselves. Heckler's strong Roman Catholic religious beliefs led her to oppose abortion; but she did not agree with the "squeal rule" which requires federally-funded clinics to notify parents of teenaged girls given prescriptions for birth control devices.

Heckler also served as co-chair of the Women's Congressional Caucus from its founding in 1977 through 1982 when she left the House. She was appointed by the Speaker of the House, Carl Albert, to the National Commission on the Observance of the International Women's Year. Later that year she was named chairperson of the first delegation of Congresswomen to visit the People's Republic of China on a fact-finding mission.

Women's issues did not dominate Heckler's attention. She was especially effective in the area of veterans' affairs and child welfare. She eventually became the second-ranking minority member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee where she addressed the special needs of veterans. She supported the creation of aging centers in Veterans' Administration hospitals to care for older veterans from the World War II era; she also urged the creation of counseling programs for the special needs of Vietnam War veterans.

Cabinet Secretary and Ambassador

After she lost the 1982 election to House Democrat and colleague Barney Frank in a strong Democratic year and a tough redistricting fight, Heckler

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was nominated by President Ronald Reagan to succeed former GOP Senator Richard Schweiker as Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) in January 1983. The Senate confirmed her appointment on March 3.

Heckler's appointment stunned many conservative Republicans who opposed some of the programs Health and Human Services operated and who expected President Reagan to appoint a Secretary to eliminate them. As a moderate in Congress, she had supported several HHS programs; and as Secretary of HHS, Heckler continued to support its programs in spite of strong opposition from some high White House staffers.

Although Margaret Heckler was never a part of President Reagan's inner circle of advisors, she had great responsibility running a bureaucracy employing more than 145,000 workers with an annual budget of $276 billion. During her years in Congress, Heckler carefully walked a tightrope between party loyalty and the more liberal leanings of her district, which had a large number of Democratic constituents. She had supported only 40 percent of the proposals that President Reagan put before Congress in his first two years in office.

Given her Congressional record, it was almost inevitable that Heckler would find herself out of place in the Reagan administration. However, as Secretary of HHS, she dutifully implemented the President's policies, but perhaps without the zeal another appointee might have shown. During her tenure as Secretary, her top priorities were to hold down medical costs, confront the newly emerging AIDS crisis and overhaul the Food and Drug Administration.

In 1985, President Reagan asked Heckler to accept an ambassadorial position as a promotion for the fine job she had performed at Health and Human Services. Not long before she resigned to accept the nomination, Secretary Heckler suggested that "women in and near the White House are subject to double standards. There's far more tolerance of incompetent males than of women." Added to her difficulties in terms of the timing of the resignation was a well-publicized divorce from her husband of 31 years.

Fortunately the divorce was quickly followed by her transfer to Dublin. By all assessments, Ambassador Margaret Heckler, at age 54, became a brilliant and effective spokesperson for her government's policies. She was immensely liked by the Irish people and she enjoyed her life and splendid dwellings in the Emerald Isle until her appointment ended in October 1989 with a new administration. She returned to private life and currently practices law in Arlington, Virginia.

Margaret Heckler is memorable not only for the eight terms she served in Congress, but for her willingness to serve effectively at many levels of government, often at some personal sacrifice, but certainly with womanly courage to provide a model for her own children and other women politicians.

Heckler has been awarded honorary doctorates from Northeastern University, Stonehill College, Emmanuel College, Regis College, St. Bonaventure University, Boston College and Wheaton College.

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Barbara Charline Jordan

(February 21, 1936-)
Democrat-Texas (18th District)
93d-95th Congresses (1973-1979)

(photo courtesy of Barbara Jordan)

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

Defender of the Constitution

Barbara Charline Jordan made history by becoming the first African American since 1883 to be elected to the Texas State Senate; the first African American to be elected president pro tempore (temporary presiding officer) of the Texas State Senate; the first and only African-American woman to be governor of a state (she was named governor for a day in Texas on June 10, 1972); and, most significantly, the first African-American woman from the South to be elected to the United States House of Representatives.

During her three terms in Congress (1973-1979), Barbara Jordan managed to convey to the whole nation her deep respect for the law and the Constitution. During the Watergate proceedings, her deep and impressive voice captivated the imagination of millions of Americans across the airwaves as she spoke eloquently about the single most important instrument that holds Americans together: the Constitution of the United States.

Background

Barbara Charline Jordan was born on February 21, 1936, in Houston, Texas, the youngest of three daughters of Benjamin M. and Arlyne Jordan. Her father graduated from Tuskeegee Institute and worked at the Houston Terminal Warehouse and Cold Storage Company before beginning his Baptist ministry in 1949 at the Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church. Her father had a profound influence on her. Not only was she a faithful member of his church, but she also inherited his fierce ambition. He was a strict disciplinarian who chastised his daughter when she brought home anything lower than an "A" on her report card. As a result, Barbara Jordan never wanted to be an average person, she always wanted to excel.

Jordan graduated from Phyllis Wheatley High School in Houston in 1952 in the top five percent of her class. Her first career goal was to become a pharmacist. After hearing a speech at the high school's career day by Edith Sampson, a black lawyer from Chicago, she decided to become a lawyer. To that end, she studied political science and history at Texas Southern University, from which she graduated magna cum laude in 1956. She earned a bachelor of laws degree at Boston University in 1959; the following year she was admitted to the bar in Massachusetts and Texas.

Jordan returned to Houston in 1960, moved in with her parents and began practicing general civil law on the dining room table until she eventually scraped up enough money to open her own office three years later. She also worked as an Administrative Assistant to County Judge Bill Elliot in Harris County, Texas.

During the 1960 presidential campaign, Jordan directed Houston's first black "one person-per-block" precinct effort to drum up support for the Democratic ticket headed by nominees John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1962 and 1964 she was an unsuccessful candidate for the state legislature.

In the Texas Legislature

When Jordan was elected to the Texas State Senate in 1966, she took her seat alongside 30 white male colleagues. She was anxious to earn the respect of her peers as a serious legislator. President Lyndon Johnson, a fellow Democrat and Texan, recognized Barbara Jordan's talent soon after she won the election. He conferred with her in the White House over such matters as fair housing legislation. They remained friends for life.

Known throughout her career as a champion of the underprivileged, Jordan began her legislative program by supporting many of the causes that would later distinguish her Congressional career. While in the Texas Senate she was chair of the Labor and Management Relations Committee and vice chair of the Legislative, Congressional and Judicial committees. She steered a bill through the Senate that established the Fair Employment Practices Commission, fought for the passage of the state's first minimum wage laws and helped to create the state's Special Department of Community Affairs to deal with the problems of the state's urban areas. The highlight of her tenure came in 1972, when she was elected president pro-tempore of the Texas Senate. It was an important and symbolic achievement for a black legislator.

As a result of the population shifts shown by the 1970 census, Texas was awarded an additional seat in the United States Congress. The newly-drawn 18th Congressional District of Texas was 50-percent black and 15-percent Hispanic. This information persuaded Jordan to enter the district Democratic primary in 1972 against Curtis Graves, another black state legislator. Graves attacked her for having close ties to the establishment and called her an "Uncle Tom." She ignored the charges and ran a positive campaign in which she captured 80 percent of the vote in the primary and went on to trounce Republican Paul Merritt in the general election with a plurality of 66,000 votes out of 85,000 votes cast.

Congressional Career

On January 3, 1973, Barbara Jordan was sworn in and took her seat as the first African-American Member of Congress from Texas since the Reconstruction era. In fact, she and her fellow freshman colleague in the 93d Congress, Andrew Young of Georgia, were the first African Americans elected to Congress from the South since 1898. Her committee assignments included the House Judiciary Committee, the Committee on Government Operations and the Steering and Policy Committee of the House Democratic Caucus.

Congresswoman Jordan's liberal legislative agenda consistently supported efforts to raise the standard of living of impoverished Ameri-

Jordan and colleague discuss the Judiciary Committee's consideration of articles of impeachment against President Richard Nixon.

cans. She backed programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity which provided services to the poor such as the establishment of an independent public corporation to provide free legal services to the poor and the creation of the Consumer Protection Agency.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, which oversaw the impeachment hearings of President Richard Nixon, Jordan made her most dramatic appearance speaking eloquently in defense of the United States Constitution. The 1973 hearings grew out of the Watergate affair when five men linked to the Republican Committee for the Reelection of the President were caught illegally wiretapping the Democratic national headquarters. After the President was implicated in a conspiracy to cover up the affair, the House Judiciary Committee convened hearings on May 9, 1973, to consider impeachment proceedings. Congresswoman Jordan concluded the crisis was a test of the Constitution—a challenge to the legislative branch's obligation to hold the executive branch responsible to the law.

When Jordan spoke at the Watergate hearings, it was with a note of irony as well as fervor that all African American Congressional legislators must sometimes feel. In her own words, Barbara Jordan mused: "'We the people'—it is a very eloquent beginning. But when the Constitution of the United States was completed on the seventeenth of September in 1787, I was not included in that 'We the people.' I felt for many years that somehow George Washington and Alexander Hamilton just left me out by mistake. But through the process of amendment, interpretation, and court

Jordan's impassioned defense of the Constitution during the 1974 impeachment hearings won her wide acclaim.

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decision, I have finally been included in 'We the people.' Today I am an inquisitor. I believe hyperbole would not be fictional and would not overstate the solemnness that I feel right now. My faith in the Constitution is whole. It is complete. It is total. I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution."

President Nixon chose to resign rather than face impeachment. His successor, President Gerald Ford, asked Jordan to be one of his personal representatives to Peking, China, in 1974.

As a Member of Congress, Jordan concentrated her efforts on domestic affairs. Elements of her legislative agenda included helping to pass the Consumer Goods Pricing Act of 1975. She supported legislation that created federally-funded programs for the treatment and prevention of diabetes, cancer and alcoholism. She endorsed the creation of a National Institute on Aging and the expansion of a program to guarantee nutritionally-balanced meals. She advocated increased federal aid to cities and recommended direct grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to metropolitan police departments and subsidies for the operations of urban mass transit systems. She worked for the repeal of federal authorization for state Fair Trade Laws which sanctioned price-fixing schemes.

An outspoken critic of large military expenditures, Jordan voted to reduce the number of American troops stationed abroad, to impose a ceiling on military aid to South Vietnam and to override President Nixon's veto of the War Powers Act limiting the president's authority to commit American troops overseas.

At the Democratic National Convention in July 1976, Jordan became the first African-American woman to deliver the keynote address of a major political party. She made a powerful impression with her rich speaking voice. She was again asked to give the keynote speech at the Party Convention of 1992 to an aroused, receptive audience.

A Busy Retirement

On December 10, 1977, Jordan announced that she would not be a candidate for reelection in 1978. It was a stunning and unexpected retirement. She was a popular Member of Congress and her premature departure set off many rumors. She explained that she had done all she wanted to do in Congress and wished to return to her native state and do other things.

Whatever her reasons for retiring from Congress, in 1978 she went on to become a professor with an endowed chair teaching public policy and political ethics at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin. From 1979 to 1981 she served on President Carter's Advisory Board on Ambassadorial Appointments. In 1991 Jordan was appointed special counsel on ethics to Governor Ann Richards of Texas. She also served on a United Nations panel that examined the role of international corporations operating in South Africa and Namibia.

Barbara Jordan never married nor had children, but her students love and respect her. Since 1988, her health has declined due to a neuromuscular disease to the point that her activities are confined to a wheel chair and walker. Nevertheless, she is still called upon to offer her talents to the nation. President Clinton appointed her to chair the United States

Commission on Immigration Reform, a bipartisan group that submitted its recommendations on immigration reform to the President in September 1994.

Honors and Awards

Barbara Jordan began her illustrious career as a legislator with a bang. She was named the outstanding freshman of the year in the Texas Senate. By 1977 she had already been awarded 22 honorary doctoral degrees bestowed by various colleges and universities. She considered the honorary degree from Harvard University to be the highlight of such honors because earlier in her life she had been discouraged from applying to that prestigious institution's law school. Harvard not only gave her an honorary doctorate, but also asked her to give the commencement address at the same ceremony. In 1984 she received the Eleanor Roosevelt Award from the International Platform Association, which had admitted her as a member of its Orators Hall of Fame and deemed her the "Best Living Orator." She also helped to found People For the American Way. In 1990 Barbara Jordan was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.

Representative Barbara Jordan was an outstanding Member of Congress. Though her tenure in the institution was brief, she proved to be a formidable legislator. She is a superb role model for all young people. She had a powerful presence. She could spellbind an audience with what the veteran political observer and prolific writer Theodore H. White once described as "a flow of Churchillian eloquence, of resonance, boom and grip so compelling as to make one forget to take notes." America was fortunate to have had such an eloquent defender of the Constitution in Congress at a time of national pain.

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Clare Boothe Luce

(April 10, 1903-October 9, 1987)
Republican-Connecticut (Fourth District)
78th-79th Congresses (1943-1947)

(Library of Congress)

Congresswoman Clare Boothe Luce.

The Successful Renaissance Woman

Clare Boothe Luce was a remarkable self-made woman with grace and style who made every accomplishment seem effortless. By combining beauty, brains and ambition, she became the quintessential success story for a generation of American women. The first woman from Connecticut elected to the United States House of Representatives and the first woman to be named American ambassador to a major European nation, she was also a successful playwright, war correspondent, political commentator and advisor to presidents. Clare Boothe Luce was one of the most charismatic, intelligent and controversial women of this century.

A Theatrical Background

Born on April 10, 1903, in New York City, Clare Boothe was one of two children of William Boothe and Ann Clare Boothe. Clare's grandfather, a Baptist parson, added the "e" to the family name in an attempt to disguise the family connection to John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Abraham Lincoln. Her mother had been a dancer and her father, William Boothe, was both a businessman of sorts and an amateur violinist who performed with theater orchestras. Her parents divorced in 1913.

Ann Clare Boothe then married Dr. Albert E. Austin, a well-to-do surgeon who provided financial stability. The family moved from its old cold water tenement on Columbus Avenue in Manhattan to a comfortable home in Old Greenwich, Connecticut.

From 1915 to 1917 Clare Boothe attended the Cathedral School of St. Mary in Garden City, New York. Because of the tumult of her family life, Clare became a compulsive eater and weighed as much as 160 pounds while a teenager. She eventually overcame her problem and became a top swimmer in school and remained a swimmer throughout her life. Her classmates recognized her as a born leader. From 1917 to 1919 she attended the Castle School, a finishing school for young ladies in Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson.

Her mother enrolled Clare in the Theater School where she worked as an understudy to Mary Pickford in David Belasco's production of *A Good Little Devil*. While working as Pickford's understudy, Clare realized she had no interest in acting. Instead she found a passion for writing and began to focus her energy on writing plays and poetry.

In 1920, Clare traveled to Europe with her mother and stepfather. On the return voyage home, her mother rearranged the deck chairs in

such a way that her daughter could meet the right people. She met socialite Mrs. August Belmont who spurred her interest in the Women's Suffrage Movement and who introduced her to George Tuttle Brokaw, an heir to a garment business fortune. Clare Boothe and Brokaw married on August 10, 1923. She gave birth to her only child, Ann Brokaw, on August 24, 1924. George Brokaw turned out to be an irredeemable alcoholic and the couple divorced in 1929. The experience later provided the germ for her play, *The Women*.

After the divorce, Clare volunteered to write captions for pictures in *Vogue* magazine just to get her foot in the door. By 1930 she landed a real job working for *Vanity Fair*, the bright sister publication of *Vogue*. In 1932 she was named its managing editor. In 1931 she published *Stuffed Shirts*, a collection of satirical essays about high society.

Her 1935 marriage to wealthy and influential publisher Henry Luce made it possible for her to resign from *Vanity Fair* and begin her life as a playwright in earnest. Her initial play, *Abide With Me*, opened on Broadway to disastrous reviews. *The Women*, which premiered in December of 1936, was her first hit. Her next play, *Kiss Me Goodbye* (1938), a political allegory about fascism, was also a success. Two of her scripts later were turned into film classics, *The Women* and *Come to the Stable*. In 1940 she published *Europe in the Spring* which grew out of her trip to Europe before the war. Finally, she traveled to the Far East as a war correspondent for *Life* magazine during the Christmas and New Year holiday season in 1941-42.

(Library of Congress)

Even at age three, Clare Boothe was a vivacious young lady.

Love, Marriage and Politics

On November 21, 1935, Clare Boothe married Henry Robinson Luce, the powerful publisher of *Time* and *Fortune* magazines. He promised to start a new illustrated magazine she had suggested (which became *Life* magazine) if she agreed to marry him. She fed him many ideas over their lifetime. Their marriage was a picture-perfect match of two kindred spirits who complemented one another in wit and ambition. She proved to be a charming, socially adept wife; he in turn provided her with the wealth and contacts to develop both her writing and political careers. They shared a wonderful life together until his sudden death in 1967 of a massive heart attack.

Before her second marriage, Clare Boothe had been a Democrat and had worked for President Roosevelt's Work Recovery Administration in 1933. But the experience caused her to doubt the capacity of government to intervene massively in social and economic affairs. She officially changed political parties when she married Luce, a Republican. In the presidential campaign of 1940, she worked for the election of Republican candidate Wendell Willkie. At a rally in New York on December 16, 1940, she spoke out against Roosevelt in her first public speech.

(Library of Congress)

As a teenager, Clare Boothe (left) enjoyed cycling with her brother David.

Running For Congress

World War II sensitized Luce to the urgency of foreign policy. In the summer of 1942, she became a candidate for the Republican nomination for the Fourth Congressional District in Connecticut, the seat that her stepfather, Dr. Austin, also a Republican, had held in the 76th Congress (1939-41). When she was first approached about the race to succeed her stepfather, she declined because she felt she was not yet qualified, but

(AP)

Luce acknowledges the cheering audience as she delivers keynote address to 1944 Republican National Convention.

later decided to seek the nomination in light of her extensive travels and interviews. She won the Republican nomination over six other candidates. She won the election with the slogan "Let's fight a hard war instead of a soft war," which she used to campaign against her Democratic opponent, LeRoy D. Downs.

Congressional Career

Clare Boothe Luce's Congressional career was confined to just two terms. In her freshman year, she was assigned to the House Military Affairs Committee, not the Foreign Affairs Committee for which she believed she was better qualified. Some of her senior colleagues resented Luce because she did not observe protocol and seniority. She was outspoken even in her first term, criticizing President Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy. She referred to Vice President Henry Wallace's proposal for freedom of the airways as "globaloney." As for FDR, she complained he had "lied us into a war into which he should have led us."

Congresswoman Luce introduced H.R. 110 to charge the Roosevelt administration with the responsibility for the surrender of Poland to the Soviet Union in the Yalta Accords. She also introduced a bill to establish a bureau in the Department of Labor to insure equal pay for equal work regardless of race or color. Luce introduced two bills to ease restrictions on the immigration of Chinese and East Indian refugees. She also introduced a bill to provide affordable housing for veterans.

Because of her reputation as a severe critic of President Roosevelt, Luce was chosen to be the keynote speaker at the Republican National Convention in June 1944 (she was also a keynote speaker in 1948). Luce was the first woman so honored by either party up to that time.

Luce's campaign rhetoric intensified perhaps due to the strain brought on by the death of her only child in an auto accident in January 1944. Luce barely won reelection in 1944; and although she served until the end of her term, she had lost much of her enthusiasm for politics.

Luce refused to consider running for a third term. In 1946 she converted to Catholicism as a result of the intense soul searching she underwent following her daughter's tragic death. She had grown more contemplative and wanted to devote more time to writing and thinking. She also did not want anyone to charge that her conversion was motivated by a desire to appeal to her constituents.

Madam Ambassador

After six years out of the limelight, Clare Boothe Luce again became active in the Republican politics when she campaigned for World War II hero General Dwight D. Eisenhower for president in 1952. Upon winning the presidency, Eisenhower asked Luce to join his cabinet. Although she rejected a cabinet position, she accepted his nomination as ambassador to Italy. The Senate confirmed her appointment on February 17, 1953, after some skirmishes over her sex, her conversion to Catholicism and her alleged inexperience.

Ambassador Luce waded into the job with her customary energy. She helped lay the diplomatic groundwork for an international conference that worked out a compromise on the status of Trieste, a dispute that threatened war between Yugoslavia and Italy. There was some criticism of the ambassador for interfering in Italy's internal affairs when she threatened to withhold American aid to Italian industry because of communist

influence in the country's labor unions. Near the end of her tenure in Italy, Luce grew disillusioned with the failure of American foreign policy to support the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

In 1959 Eisenhower nominated Luce as ambassador to Brazil. Congress approved the choice, but she withdrew because of a stinging personal attack by Senator Wayne Morse (D-OR) on her wartime criticisms of Roosevelt. In 1964 she worked for the presidential candidacy of Barry Goldwater and briefly entered the race on the Conservative Party ticket in New York for the United States Senate before she was persuaded to withdraw.

Luce also served as a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board for three Republican presidents: Nixon, Ford and Reagan, who valued her advice on foreign policy.She returned to live in Washington in 1983 and died in the city she loved on October 9, 1987. Her funeral was attended by the great and powerful in American society. A plantation in Mepkin, South Carolina, where she had spent the happiest days of her marriage, was turned over to Trappist Monks. Her body was buried next to her late husband and daughter.

(AP)

Ambassador Luce pauses at National Airport before returning to her post in Italy in 1956. She had been home for three weeks to recover from an illness.

Honors and Awards

Luce received numerous honorary degrees from several universities. Recognizing her limited formal education, she marvelled at the honors: "Just think of it: eight or nine honorary degrees, and I never finished high school." She won the Cardinal Newman Award in 1951 from the Federation of College Newman Clubs. She was the first woman ever honored with the Sylvanus Thayer Award, the highest honor that West Point can confer on a civilian. Luce was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Reagan in 1983.

Even though the time she spent in the United States House of Representatives was relatively brief, Representative Clare Boothe Luce made an impression as a patriot dedicated to the defense of her country. But Luce's talents were not confined to one branch of government or one sector of society. She was America's genuine Renaissance woman, a self-made promoter of the arts and letters and diplomacy.

The Medal of Freedom Citation summed up Luce's contributions succinctly: "A novelist, playwright, politician, diplomat, and advisor to Presidents, Clare Boothe Luce has served and enriched her country in many fields. Her brilliance of mind, gracious warmth, and great fortitude have propelled her to exceptional heights of accomplishment. As a congresswoman, ambassador, and member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Clare Boothe Luce has been a persistent and effective advocate of freedom, both at home and abroad. She has earned the respect of people from all over the world and the love of her fellow Americans."

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Lynn Martin

(December 26, 1939-)
Republican-Illinois (16th District)
97th-101st Congresses (1981-1991)

(Courtesy of Lynn Martin)

Congresswoman Lynn Martin.

The Natural Politician

Republican Lynn Martin of Illinois is a natural politician from the land of Lincoln. Smart, industrious and resourceful, she is the product of a solid Midwestern upbringing by hard-working Democratic parents. She acquired her parents' progressive views about what government can do to ensure social justice; but she also developed a healthy respect for restraint on government spending which drew her to the Republican Party as an adult.

Throughout her political career, she has had a deep belief in the ultimate wisdom of the American people. It is in that context that Lynn Martin's approach to political office has always been a mixture of fiscal conservatism and social progressivism.

As a state legislator, a Member of Congress and a cabinet officer, Lynn Martin was always ready to take on her responsibilities with competence, enthusiasm and fairness. She is one of the few women politicians elected to Congress after having served in both houses of the state legislature. She became the highest ranking woman in the Republican leadership in the United States House of Representatives, a position won largely on the basis of her reputation as an expert on the budgetary process.

Learning to Believe in Herself

Born Judith Lynn Morley in Evanston, Illinois, on December 26, 1939, she was the youngest of two daughters of Lawrence William Morley and Helen Catherine (Hall) Morley. Her father was an accountant and her mother worked as a department store clerk. Lynn and her sister were raised on the North Side of Chicago by loving, hard-working parents who fit the profile of the majority in that predominantly Irish Catholic and Democratic neighborhood.

Lynn was a smart but restless young girl and, admittedly, a bit of a tomboy. She attended the Immaculate Conception Elementary School and William Howard Taft High School in Chicago from which she graduated as an honor student in 1957.

While she was in school, Lynn Morley learned an early lesson in politics. In the eighth grade she decided to run for class president against her boyfriend. She said, "I lost by one vote. My vote. You see, I voted for my opponent because I thought it was polite. . . . Well, he voted for himself, and I learned my lesson: if you believe in yourself, vote for yourself."

An excellent student, Lynn earned election to Phi Beta Kappa honor society and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Illinois at Urbana in 1960. She also earned enough credits for a teaching certificate. A week after graduation from college, Lynn married John Martin, an engineering student.

Shortly after her marriage, Lynn Martin became pregnant. Because pregnant teachers were not allowed to work at that time, she postponed her career until after her daughter, Julia, was born. In the meantime, her husband was able to establish a thriving business. The couple had another daughter, Caroline, born in 1969. They divorced in 1978. In January 1987, she married Judge Harry Leinenweber of the U.S. Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

When Lynn Martin resumed teaching after the birth of her first child, she taught English, government, and economics at Wheaton Central and Saint Francis High Schools in DuPage County, Illinois, and at Muldoon Catholic and Guilford High Schools in Rockford. She was also active in the American Association of University Women and the Junior League.

The early years of her first marriage formed a crucial period in Martin's life. Even when she stayed home to raise her children, she formed supportive relationships with other women in similar circumstances. She lived in an atmosphere which encouraged her to think about what she wanted to do with her life. Politics slowly emerged as an attractive and viable option.

(Courtesy of Lynn Martin)

Direct appeals to the voters characterized Martin's first campaign for Congress in 1980.

Learning Politics

If anyone could be considered Lynn Martin's political mentor, it was Betty Ann Keegan, a Democratic state senator who first encouraged her to run for office. Another mentor was veteran Congressman Robert Michel (R-IL) who helped her obtain a significant committee assignment years later when she first entered Congress.

In 1972, Martin won the race for a seat on the Winnebago County Board. Four years later she was elected to the Illinois House where she served on the Appropriations Committee and earned a reputation for frugality with regard to spending public funds. In 1978 she was elected to the Illinois State Senate where she served also on its Appropriations Committee. She co-sponsored a bill with Richard M. Daley, Jr., a Democratic colleague from Chicago, to require minimum standards for nursing homes throughout Illinois as well as a bill of rights for the residents of such homes. She is proud of that legislation because her mother had been a victim of Alzheimer's disease.

In 1980 Congressman John B. Anderson of Illinois' Sixth District gave up his seat to run for the presidency. Martin had served only part of her State Senate term when national members of the Republican Party urged her to run for Anderson's Congressional seat. Martin campaigned on a moderate platform of lower taxes, business deregulation, support for the Equal Rights Amendment and a pro-choice position on abortion. She gained national support from women's organizations which helped her to win the nomination over five male opponents. Martin went on to win in the general election against her Democratic opponent by a two-to-one margin.

The Exemplary Republican Woman Legislator

The timing of Lynn Martin's election could not have been better. The new Republican Minority Leader of the 97th Congress was her friend and mentor, Robert Michel. With his assistance she was appointed to important committees. In her first term, she was named to the House Budget Committee on which she served for three Congresses. She won a seat on the powerful and prestigious Committee on Rules in her second term. She also served on the Committee on Armed Services in the 99th and 100th Congresses. During House budget negotiations in 1986, Martin was appointed acting ranking minority member for a time when Delbert Latta (R-OH) underwent heart surgery. She got along well with the Democratic chairman of the committee, William H. Gray III (D-PA).

As Democrats made history in 1984 by choosing a woman vice-presidential candidate, Lynn Martin's stock in the Republican Party rose. Lynn's quick and caustic wit was viewed as an asset for the Grand Old Party. Many of her senior Republican colleagues believed she would make a good stand-in as a debate partner for their own vice-presidential candidate. In practice debates, Martin helped coach Vice-President George Bush to prepare him for the real debates with Democratic candidate Geraldine Ferraro. Moreover, she was also chosen to deliver the nominating speech for Bush at the Republican National Convention in Dallas. She was later named chairperson of the Reagan-Bush campaign in Illinois. After the 1984 campaign, Martin was elected vice-chairperson of the House Republican Conference, the first woman to hold such a high position in the Republican leadership. In fact, by 1986, Representative Lynn Martin was viewed as the best woman legislator in Congress. In 1989 she was named Republican woman of the year.

Martin's legislative activities included supporting the Reagan administration in voting for the construction of the MX missile, the early deployment of the Star Wars program and aid to the Contra rebels in El Salvador. On other issues she supported a nuclear freeze and opposed the production of chemical weapons. She supported the Equal Rights Amendment and federal funding of abortions for poor women. After visiting South Africa and seeing firsthand the effects of apartheid (official racial segregation), she voted to override President Reagan's veto of sanctions against the South African government in 1986. She also made it possible for all 30,000 Congressional staff members to have protection under the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Martin's voting record in general reflected the fiscal conservatism but social progressivism of her Midwestern roots. For example, while she supported the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings spending restraints, she often clashed with the Secretary of Defense over massive military spending at the expense of domestic social programs. She also co-sponsored, with Democratic colleague Rick Boucher of Virginia, increased penalties for white-collar crimes such as fraud, income tax evasion and antitrust law violations. She consistently supported equal pay issues regarding gender and race. She also served as a member of the Export Task Force, the Congressional Rural Caucus and the Steering Committee for the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition.

Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin

In 1990, President George Bush and Illinois Governor James Thompson urged Representative Martin to give up her relatively safe Congressional seat and run against Democratic incumbent Paul Simon for the United States Senate seat from Illinois. It was a gallant effort, but she was defeated.

Several factors contributed to Martin's defeat. She ran against a well-financed incumbent, some of whose funding was provided by the Women's Campaign Fund (WCF) established to help women run for public office. Lynn Martin and Simon were both pro-choice on abortion rights. WCF Director Jane Danowitz admitted that her record on the issue was better than his. But the WCF supported Simon because he was close to many of their donors. Another factor in her defeat was timing; the campaign took on a different character after Operation Desert Storm when Senator Simon, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was televised from Saudi Arabia greeting American troops. The war helped President Bush's popularity, but it did not transfer to Lynn Martin in the eyes of Illinois voters. She lost the election to Simon by a margin of nearly a million votes.

On December 14, 1990, President Bush nominated Martin to be Secretary of Labor. In a way, it was almost a repeat of what had taken place eight years earlier when Massachusetts Republican Representative Margaret Heckler was named Health and Human Services Secretary by President Ronald Reagan after she lost reelection to Congress. Martin's service in Congress ended in January 1991 when she became the fourth woman to head the Department of Labor following Democrat Frances Perkins under President Franklin Roosevelt and two Republicans, Elizabeth Dole and Ann McLaughlin, under President Reagan.

Her new position enabled Secretary Martin to work to implement much of her social agenda, especially with regard to discrimination

Martin is sworn in with other Members of the 97th Congress in 1981.

(Courtesy of Lynn Martin)

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against minorities and women. A centerpiece of her effort attempted to break the "glass ceiling" said to hold back many women as they advanced up the corporate ladder.

On some social issues Martin differed with the President; but she was clever enough to finesse them. She supported the family leave legislation which President Bush vetoed and the Civil Rights Bill that the President called a quota bill but finally signed with a few changes. Martin avoided challenging President Bush philosophically; but she did not abandon her own beliefs. She gave the President her honest advice on controversial issues and he respected her for not being a "yes woman."

(Courtesy of Lynn Martin)

Martin meets with President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush. She served as President Bush's Secretary of Labor from 1991 to 1993.

Return to the Private Sector

When President Bush lost the 1992 election, Martin's job as Secretary of Labor came to an end. She has returned to private life, but still plays an important role in the Republican Party and the women's movement.

As a Member of Congress, Lynn Martin viewed her responsibilities with joy and enthusiasm. She truly loved her job, served her constituents well and thrived on her belief in individual rights and responsibilities. She was a mixture of social progressivism and fiscal conservatism; but in every political position she took, Lynn Martin spoke for the people she represented. Her enthusiasm was most keenly evident in the following description she gave of her job as Secretary of Labor: "A Labor Secretary, more than any other government official, should be listening to people's problems in the workplace, sharing their pride and success and getting her hands dirty too. Otherwise you cannot speak for them. And I hate to admit it—but it's been pure fun, too."

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Jeannette Pickering Rankin

(June 11, 1880-May 18,1973)
Republican-Montana (at large and First District)
65th and 77th Congresses (1917-19, 1941-43)

Library of Congress

Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin.

First Woman in the United States Congress

Jeannette Rankin's election to Congress marked the beginning of a powerful historical trend in the role of women in contemporary American politics. Elected more than three years before the ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution gave all adult women in the United States the right to vote, she was the first woman ever to serve in the United States Congress.

Representative Rankin was more than a trailblazer for women's rights; she was also a pacifist. Moreover, she had the courage to say no to war, not once but twice when her country faced that crucial decision. Voting against war was difficult because everything Rankin did reflected on the women's movement. As a pacifist with high moral ideals, she made the only choice she could make. She stood by her principles in spite of the consequences and voted against Congressional declarations of war in 1917 and 1941.

An Education in Women's Rights

Rankin was born on June 11, 1880, on a ranch near Missoula, Montana. Her mother, Janette Pickering, had taught school in New Hampshire before she moved to Montana and married John Rankin, a rancher and lumber dealer. Jeannette was the first of seven children; six girls and one boy.

Rankin was a good student in high school and played basketball until she broke her nose. She entered the University of Montana and graduated with a teaching degree in June 1902. Rankin chose teaching because it was one of the few professions open to women at the time. She briefly enrolled in the New York School of Philanthropy in 1908. In her studies, she hoped to find solutions to the problems of the poor she had observed in New York City.

In New York, Rankin became exposed to the growing women's suffrage movement and read articles and pamphlets concerning the issue. While visiting her brother in law school, she came to the conclusion that it was unfair for women not to have the right to vote. In 1909, she went to the University of Washington in Seattle to study economics and sociology.

Organizing for Women's Suffrage

In Seattle, Rankin began working in the women's suffrage movement by organizing meetings and rallies. She became chairwoman of the women's

suffrage movement in Montana in 1909. She traveled extensively throughout the United States with stops in California, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and New York. Undoubtedly, Rankin was a persuasive personality and speaker. When the Montana Legislature considered a bill in 1910 pertaining to women's right to vote, she addressed the body with such grace and eloquence that her name quickly spread throughout the state.

In 1913 Rankin became field secretary for the National American Woman Suffrage Association. She even traveled to New Zealand in 1915 where she briefly worked as a seamstress in a factory in order to experience the difficulties of women working in that country.

Rankin's diligent labor bore fruit in 1914 when Montana granted women the vote and made it possible for her to run for public office in her own home state. In 1916, with her brother Wellington as campaign manager, Rankin won the Republican primary nomination to one of Montana's two at-large seats in the United States House of Representatives. She won the general election in November.

(Montana Historical Society)

Jeannette Rankin (right) poses with her sisters Philena and Harriet.

The First Woman in Congress

When Jeannette Rankin took the oath of office in the 65th Congress on March 4, 1917, her colleagues in the House of Representatives applauded vigorously. They realized history was being made as she became the first woman to serve in the world's foremost legislative body. This was all the more remarkable because Montana was the only state in the country that offered such an opportunity for women at the time.

Rankin's principal Congressional activity was leading the fight for women's right to vote. She led the passage of the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, which became the 19th amendment to the Constitution of the United States and granted universal voting rights to all women citizens. While the bill was pending in the House of Representatives, she was the main spokesperson advocating its approval. The bill was finally passed in 1919.

Rankin maintained a full legislative agenda. She kept her promises to her constituents and introduced a number of bills to benefit her home state and the nation. She introduced a bill to build clinics for children and provide pre-natal care for pregnant women. She sponsored legislation to establish child health care centers for working mothers. She introduced a bill providing equal job opportunities and equal pay for women in war-related industries. She also advocated the abolition of child labor in industry.

In keeping with her support for women's suffrage, Rankin sought to further improve the position of women by introducing a bill to grant them citizenship independent of their husbands. She also called attention to the problems of women in the government work place. She found that women working for the Federal Bureau of Printing and Engraving were forced to work 14-hour days with no overtime and were threatened with what today would be called sexual harassment.

Four days after Representative Rankin took her seat in Congress, she was faced with the difficult decision of American entry into World War I. Although President Wilson had promised to keep the country out of the war in Europe, German submarine warfare brought the nation to the brink of war. The day after a special session of Congress convened in April 1917, President Wilson requested a declaration of war.

Up to that time, Rankin was best known for her views on women's right to vote. The extent of her commitment to pacifism was unknown.

She faced a terrible dilemma. Her very first vote in Congress would have to be over the most serious issue of all: the question of war or peace. Rankin was fiercely patriotic. As she said when casting her vote, "I want to stand by my country; but I cannot vote for war."

Although Rankin was joined by 49 of her male colleagues in the House, and six in the Senate, in voting against the declaration of war, the nation and the press focused more attention on her vote. Some of her supporters in the women's movement were bitterly divided and insinuated she had set back the cause of women's rights. Moreover, Rankin's first vote essentially doomed her legislative career. Although some of her like-minded male colleagues weathered the storm and were reelected, she was not. In spite of her commendable record, she was soundly defeated when she ran for the Senate in 1918.

In 1916, Rankin had run for one of Montana's two at-large seats; that is, both representatives were elected by all of the state's voters. Two years later, Montana was divided geographically into two Congressional districts. Because the district in which she lived was mostly Democratic, Rankin decided to run for the Senate. When she lost the Republican primary, she ran and lost on a reform coalition ticket.

The First Post-Congressional Career

Jeannette Rankin said she did not regret her vote against World War I and devoted her time to the pursuit of world peace and women's rights. After the war ended in 1919, Rankin attended a meeting in Switzerland of women from around the world to organize the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Rankin kept busy dividing her time between working for the league and other groups dedicated to improving health and working conditions for American women. She used her considerable powers of persuasion to lobby lawmakers. Her busy life took a series of twists and turns.

By 1940 Rankin returned to Montana where she had maintained her legal residence even though she also had a home in Georgia. With storm clouds of war gathering once again, she decided to run for Congress on an isolationist platform. She defeated a New Deal Democrat, Jerry O'Connell.

Rankin family portrait: Jeannette is seated third from left, next to her sister Harriet and across the table from her brother Wellington.

(Montana Historical Society)

Back to the House: The Second Mandate

Rankin returned to Congress as the representative from the First District of Montana to the 77th Congress on January 3, 1941. When Congress faced another war resolution on December 8th, after President Roosevelt's dramatic speech condemning the Japanese surprise attack on the American fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor, Rankin was unable to get Speaker Sam Rayburn's permission to address the House.

This time she was not the only woman in Congress. There were eight women in the House and one woman, Hattie W. Caraway, in the Senate. However, Rankin was the only Member, man or woman, to vote against the declaration of war, to the dismay of her colleagues who implored her to make the vote unanimous. Leaving the House floor, Rankin encountered a barrage of flash bulbs and reporters' questions. She made her way to a telephone booth in the cloakroom and called the Capitol police to escort her to her office. Because of the unpopularity of her vote, Rankin did not run for relection in 1942.

Rankin was a highly visible woman suffragist and an independent woman in her own right.

The Second and Last Post-Congressional Career

For the next 20 years, most people forgot about Jeannette Rankin. In the years following the war, she made several trips abroad. During the 1950's she made a pilgrimage to India to study the pacifism of Mahatma Gandhi. She came home more dedicated than ever to pacifism as a way to end war among nations.

By the 1960s, Rankin was in her 80s, still trim and outspoken, when a new generation of feminists discovered her as a heroine, especially during the rising tide of protest over the Vietnam War. In the late 1960s she led a group of 5,000 women, whom the newspapers dubbed the "Jeannette Rankin Brigade," in a march on Washington to protest the war. She even briefly considered another run for Congress in 1968 at the age of 88; but poor health made her face reality. Three weeks before her 93d birthday, she died peacefully on May 18, 1973, in Carmel, California. In 1993, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York.

By virtue of being the first woman elected to Congress, Jeannette Rankin established a precedent for all the women who followed; by virtue of her devotion to pacifist and feminist principles, even when they threatened her political survival, she set a high standard for all Members of Congress. "You don't do the right thing because of the consequences. If you're wise, you do it regardless of the consequences," she said.

Fiorello LaGuardia, former Mayor of New York and a former Congressman, wrote handbills for her campaign in 1940. "This woman has more courage and packs a harder punch than a regiment of regular line politicians," he wrote. But it was Representative Jeannette Rankin herself who best explained her deep commitment and courage to stand up for the principles she revered most—feminism and peace: "I knew that if I voted for war I would violate my intellectual integrity. As the first woman ever elected to Congress I felt a deep obligation to vote right as a woman. It was important that I take this first opportunity to protest. War had always seemed to me the worst way ever devised for settling disputes."

For Further Reading

Kevin Giles, *Flight of the Dove: The Story of Jeannette Rankin*, (1980).
Hannah Josephson, *Jeannette Rankin: First Lady in Congress, A Biography*, (1974).
Florence Meiman White, *First Woman in Congress: Jeannette Rankin*, (1980).

Margaret Chase Smith

(December 14, 1897-May 29, 1995)
Republican-Maine (Second District)
U.S. House of Representatives
76th-80th Congresses (1940-1949)
United States Senate
81st-92d Congresses (1949-1973)

(Margaret Chase Smith Library)

Senator Margaret Chase Smith.

Trailblazing Member of Both Houses of Congress

Margaret Chase Smith was a trailblazer in many ways. During 33 years in the Congress of the United States, she was the first of only four women to date (Barbara Mikulski [D-MD], Barbara Boxer [D-CA] and Olympia Snowe [R-ME] are the other three) to serve in both chambers—nearly nine years in the House and 24 years in the Senate. She served longer than any other woman in the history of the Senate. She was the first woman elected to a leadership post in the Senate, the first woman to serve on the House Naval Affairs Subcommittee, the first woman on the House Armed Services Committee, the first woman to be seriously considered as a vice-presidential candidate by a major party (in 1952) and the first woman to have her name placed in nomination as a presidential candidate (in the 1964 Republican National Convention).

Margaret Chase Smith distinguished herself by establishing a consecutive roll call voting record, never missing one of 2,941 Congressional roll call votes. Voting was a sacred duty to her. No one, man or woman, had set such a record until then, and it was an accomplishment of which she was rightfully proud. Her voting record went to the heart of her view of representative government. She believed her constituents sent her to Washington because they had confidence in her integrity and good judgment.

Known for her independence of mind and spirit, Smith was often viewed as a maverick who sometimes took positions that clashed with her own party. Though she was staunchly Republican, she was willing to support legislation sponsored by Democrats if she perceived it to be in the interests of the nation as a whole. She did not make those decisions lightly. They were reached after careful study. Mrs. Smith, in fact, was known for doing her homework. Always prepared, Margaret Chase Smith gained a reputation as a sharp questioner and skilled debater.

New England Background

Margaret Chase Smith was a true New England Yankee. Born in the small mill town of Skowhegan, Maine, she was the eldest of the six children of George Emery and Carrie Matilda Chase. She spent most of her life in Skowhegan, except for the 33 years of service in Congress and a brief period on the Governor's Council in Augusta, the state capital.

The product of her environment, she had a pleasant childhood in a state where people prided themselves on hard work and independence of

mind. Her father had a tiny one-chair barber shop. The family income was supplemented when necessary by her mother's various part-time jobs. At age 13, Margaret herself began working part-time in the local five-and-dime store. Although she was a good student, the family's modest means precluded any notion of going to college.

Margaret tried several different jobs after high school. These ranged from teaching in a country school for a brief period to working as an advertising clerk for the weekly *Independent Reporter*, where she met the newspaper's part-owner, Clyde Smith. She assisted with a girl's basketball team in her spare time. She also organized several business clubs, and, at age 26, she became the president of the Maine Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. That position would later help her politically.

The Smiths Go to Washington

By the time Margaret Chase married Clyde Smith in 1930, she had already become an important person in the community. At 54, he was 21 years older than his bride and a prominent official who had successfully won every office he pursued. Though very much in demand herself as a speaker and organizer, she turned her talents to promoting her husband's career. She persuaded him to run for Congress in 1936. When the Smiths went to Washington, she became his secretary. Working as much as 15 hours a day, she learned many of the political skills needed to succeed in Congress.

When Clyde Smith suffered a heart attack in 1940, his wife filed as his substitute for reelection to the House. He did not recover, unfortunately. So Margaret Chase Smith entered Congress like most of her women counterparts had up to that time, as widow successors charged

(Margaret Chase Smith Library)

Margaret Chase Smith (second row, left) played on her championship high school basketball team in Maine.

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with carrying on the legacy of their spouses. But that was where the similarity ended. After she completed his term, she consistently won reelection in her own right with large majorities over the course of her long public career.

On Her Own

Margaret Chase Smith broke with tradition as soon as she got to Congress by seeking important committee assignments normally reserved for her senior male colleagues. Although she didn't get the assignments she wanted right away, she quickly established a reputation as a serious legislator.

She seemed drawn to military and foreign affairs. When she arrived in Congress in 1940, war clouds were on the horizon in Europe and the Pacific. She was concerned about the security of the United States in a world threatened by dictators. She knew that the nation was not prepared for war. Almost immediately she found herself at odds with her party by voting for the selective service system to draft young men into the Armed Forces. She also supported providing military supplies to Great Britain.

Margaret Chase Smith generally supported the defense and foreign policies of the Roosevelt and Truman administrations and even some domestic policies such as Social Security and minimum wage legislation. In 1947, however, she voted to override President Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act. Her independence made it difficult to categorize her on the political spectrum.

When Mrs. Smith entered Congress in 1940, the assignment she really wanted was the Naval Affairs Committee because of Maine's long coastline and the importance of naval yards and shipbuilding to the state's

President Harry Truman signed the 1947 bill sponsored by Congresswoman Smith granting permanent status in the military to Army and Navy nurses.

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economy. Under the prevailing seniority system, freshmen and junior members were usually assigned to minor committees. Each year she shrewdly requested the highly prestigious Appropriations Committee as her first choice and listed her true choice second. Then after making a fuss about not getting her first choice, she eventually got a seat on Naval Affairs in 1943 as a consolation prize.

Her work on the Naval Affairs Committee included an inquiry into destroyer production during World War II, which resulted in her becoming the first woman to sail on a destroyer in wartime. Her subcommittee study of congested areas took her on a 25,000-mile fact-finding tour of bases in the South Pacific during the winter of 1944-45 in an attempt to find the cause of the bottleneck in the Navy's supply effort. Her work in this regard earned the subcommittee a presidential unit citation from President Roosevelt and led to speculation she might be appointed Under Secretary of the Navy.

The military reserve and the status of women in the Armed Forces were two other related interests in Mrs. Smith's Congressional career. She introduced the first reserve retirement legislation in 1943 and the first legislation to provide drill pay for reservists as well as equal death and disability coverage for those on active duty.

Her concern with the status of women in the military began during World War II, when women were considered noncombat personnel but often found themselves as much in harm's way as men. This was especially true for the nurses whose services were vital for combat troops. Nevertheless, it was a hard struggle to get the military to appreciate the contribution of women during wartime. Congresswoman Smith played a major role in the ultimate passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 which gave women equal pay, rank and privileges. For her work in protecting and furthering the status of women in the Navy, she earned the affectionate title of "Mother of the Waves." In 1947, the Naval Affairs Committee was redesignated as the House Armed Services Committee and she became its first woman member and chair of its medical subcommittee.

From the House to the Senate

When Republican Wallace H. White, the senior Senator from Maine, announced his retirement in 1948, Mrs. Smith decided to run for the seat. The competition in the state Republican primary was formidable. In the running were the current governor, a former governor and one of the most popular speakers in the state. With very little money, Mrs. Smith campaigned in all 600 Maine communities in bad weather conditions. In fact, she fell on an icy sidewalk and broke her arm. She considered it a painful but lucky break, because she kept her scheduled campaign speaking engagements in spite of her condition. Her dramatic appearances, plus the dedicated work of hundreds of volunteers, drew the admiration of the voters. Hers was truly a grassroots campaign. She won the Republican senatorial nomination in the June 1948 primary by winning more votes than all three of her opponents combined. Given the weakness of the Democratic Party in Maine at the time, winning the primary was tantamount to winning the election.

On the occasion of her massive victory, Margaret Chase Smith paid homage to her late husband and the experience she gained by being his secretary: "I'm a real product of nepotism. I wouldn't be in Congress if I

hadn't been a member of my husband's staff." She was often referred to as the first lady of the Senate. Even so, in spite of her experience in the House of Representatives, she had to start all over again in terms of important committee assignments. She had to work for five years before gaining a seat on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Senator Smith at work on an Appropriations Subcommittee in 1964.

Fearless Defender of Civility

Perhaps her finest hour came when Senator Margaret Chase Smith, joined by a few of her colleagues, decided to confront Senator Joseph McCarthy. The Senator from Wisconsin had been using his position to make what some believed were reckless accusations that the government, the media and higher education were infested with Communists and Communist sympathizers.

Sen. Smith confronted McCarthy's tactics in a speech which she dubbed "A Declaration of Conscience." She spoke as a woman, a Senator and an American who decried the debasing of the deliberative nature of the institution "to the level of a forum of hate and character assassination sheltered by the shield of Congressional immunity." Without calling his name, she denounced McCarthy for creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in his anti-Communist crusade. "The American people are sick and tired of being afraid to speak their minds lest they be politically smeared as Communists," she said. After reminding her colleagues of the Constitution's freedoms, which they were sworn to uphold, she also noted that the Constitution "speaks not only of the freedom of speech but also of trial by jury instead of trial by accusation."

Smith's 1950 speech was favorably received, but it did little in the short run to restrain McCarthy or his tactics. However, it will always be remembered that a lone woman among a body of powerful men was the first to confront a demagogue at the height of his power in order to protect a free society.

Mrs. Smith's reelections by huge majorities in 1954, 1960 and 1966 reinforced her fierce independence and earned the respect of her colleagues. Her seniority entitled her to seats on important committees which gave her an opportunity to shine. Besides serving on the Armed Services Committee and chairing its Reserve General Officer Promotions Subcommittee, she also served on the Appropriations, Government Operations, Rules and Space Committees.

Honors for the Defense of the Nation

Mrs. Smith may have opposed Senator McCarthy's tactics, but she was not soft on Communism or the Soviet Union, which she regarded as a major threat to the security of her nation. She used her position on the Senate Armed Services Committee to push for greater national defense capability, nuclear power and space exploration as a matter of national security. She helped write the Reserve Officer Personnel Act and other important military legislation. She consistently shattered stereotypes of women's supposed incapacity to grasp the intricacies of military weapons systems, strategy and budgets.

More important even than the respect of her colleagues were the many honors she received from military and veterans groups. She was a great supporter of air power and served as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force Reserve in the 1950s. In 1957 she spent a month on active duty

conducting a personnel evaluation at the Air Force's request. During a committee hearing, she proudly cited her honors from "such organizations as . . . the Air Force Association to be a champion for air power." She has also been honored by the National Guard Association. The Veterans of Foreign Wars awarded her its Medal for Americanism in 1954. She won a similar medal from the Freedoms Foundation in 1950 and the Distinguished Service Award on National Defense from the Reserve Officers Association in 1955.

The crowning award for Mrs. Smith's lifetime of service came in 1989 when President George Bush presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

The Lady from Maine in Retirement

Margaret Chase Smith survived several election campaigns, including one in 1960 that pitted her against another woman candidate, Lucia Cormier, minority leader of the Maine House of Representatives. It was the first time in American history that two women ran for the same Senate seat. Mrs. Smith engaged in her last campaign for reelection in 1972 when she lost for the first time in her career to Democrat William D. Hathaway.

Following her defeat in 1972, Mrs. Smith entered into a splendid retirement. Over the years she was cited often as "woman of the year" or listed among the "ten most admired women in the world." During her long public career she traveled extensively and met with nearly every world leader. It is believed that she received more honorary degrees (95) than any other person, living or dead. This is all the more amazing for a person who did not attend college. But she took pride in the honors because they were given in recognition for the education she received in the school of experience.

Happily, Margaret Chase Smith lived to see the fulfillment of a dream—her own library. It was built adjacent to her family home in Skowhegan by the Northwood University, a private business college with campuses in several states. It is a unique honor because usually only presidents have separate libraries to house their papers. She was grateful for such a long and fulfilling life. "Many people are remembered after they die. I'm so grateful to think that I'm seeing what's going on while I'm still around." After suffering a stroke, she died May 29, 1995, at the age of 97 at her home in Skowhegan.

For Further Reading:

Doris and Harold Faber, *Great Lives: American Government*, (1988).
Alberta Gould, *First Lady of the Senate: A Life of Margaret Chase Smith*, (1990).
Margaret Chase Smith and H. Paul Jeffers, *Gallant Women*, (1968).

Appendices

Women In Congress: An Alphabetical Listing

Abel, Hazel Hempel (R-NE) 1954
Abzug, Bella S. (D-NY) 1971-77
Allen, Maryon Pittman (D-AL) 1978-79
Andrews, Elizabeth B. (D-AL) 1972-73
Ashbrook, Jean (R-OH) 1982-83
Baker, Irene Bailey (R-TN) 1964-65
Bentley, Helen Delich (R-MD) 1985-95
Blitch, Iris Faircloth (D-GA) 1955-63
Boggs, Corinne C. (Lindy) (D-LA) 1973-91
Boland, Veronica Grace (D-PA) 1942-43
Bolton, Frances Payne (R-OH) 1940-69
Bosone, Reva Zilpha Beck (D-UT) 1949-53
Boxer, Barbara (D-CA) 1984-
Bowring, Eva Kelly (R-NE) 1954
Brown, Corinne (D-FL) 1993-
Buchanan, Vera Daerr (D-PA) 1951-55
Burdick, Jocelyn Birch (D-ND) 1992-
Burke, Yvonne Brathwaite (D-CA) 1973-79
Burton, Sala (D-CA) 1983-87
Bushfield, Vera Caladan (R-SD) 1948
Byrne, Leslie (D-VA) 1993-95
Byron, Beverly Barton Butcher (D-MD) 1979-93
Byron, Katharine Edgar (D-MD) 1941-43
Cantwell, Maria (D-WA) 1993-95
Caraway, Hattie Wyatt (D-AR) 1931-45
Chenoweth, Helen (R-ID) 1995-
Chisholm, Shirley Anita (D-NY) 1969-83
Church, Marguerite Stitt (R-IL) 1951-63
Clarke, Marian Williams (R-NY) 1933-35
Clayton, Eva (D-NC) 1992-
Collins, Barbara Rose (D-MI) 1991-
Collins, Cardiss (D-IL) 1973-
Cubin, Barbara (R-WY) 1995-
Danner, Pat (D-MO) 1993-
DeLauro, Rosa (D-CT) 1991-
Douglas, Emily Taft (D-IL) 1945-47
Douglas, Helen Gahagan (D-CA) 1945-51
Dunn, Jennifer (R-WA) 1993-
Dwyer, Florence Price (R-NJ) 1957-73
Edwards, Elaine (D-LA) 1972-73
English, Karan (D-AZ) 1993-95
Eshoo, Anna (D-CA) 1993-
Eslick, Willa McCord Blake (D-TN) 1932-33
Farrington, Mary Elizabeth Pruett (R-HI) 1954-57
Feinstein, Dianne (D-CA) 1992-
Felton, Rebecca Latimer (D-GA) 1922
Fenwick, Millicent (R-NJ) 1975-83
Ferraro, Geraldine Ann (D-NY) 1979-85
Fiedler, Bobbi (R-CA) 1981-87
Fowler, Tillie (R-FL) 1993-
Fulmer, Willa Lybrand (D-SC) 1941-45
Furse, Elizabeth (D-OR) 1993-
Gasque, Elizabeth Hawley (D-SC) 1939-
Gibbs, Florence Reville (D-GA) 1940-41
Granahan, Kathryn Elizabeth (D-PA) 1956-63
Grasso, Ella T. (D-CT) 1971-75
Graves, Dixie Bibb (D-AL) 1937-38
Green, Edith (D-OR) 1955-75
Greenway, Isabella Selmes (D-AZ) 1933-37
Griffiths, Martha Wright (D-MI) 1955-75
Hall, Katie (D-IN) 1982-85
Hansen, Julia Butler (D-WA) 1961-75
Harden, Cecil Murray (R-IN) 1949-50
Harman, Jane (D-CA) 1993-
Hawkins, Paula (R-FL) 1981-87
Heckler, Margaret M. (R-MA) 1967-83
Hicks, Louise Day (D-MA) 1971-73
Holt, Marjorie S. (R-MD) 1973-87
Holtzman, Elizabeth (D-NY) 1973-81
Honeyman, Nan Wood (D-OR) 1937-39
Horn, Joan Kelly (D-MO) 1991-93
Huck, Winnifred Sprague Mason (R-IL) 1922-23
Humphrey, Muriel Buck (D-MN) 1978-79
Hutchison, Kay Bailey (R-TX) 1993-
Jenckes, Virginia Ellis (D-IN) 1933-39
Johnson, Eddie Bernice (D-TX) 1993-
Johnson, Nancy L. (R-CT) 1983-
Jordan, Barbara C. (D-TX) 1973-79
Kahn, Florence Prag (R-CA) 1925-37
Kaptur, Marcy (D-OH) 1983-
Kassebaum, Nancy Landon (R-KS) 1979-
Kee, Maude Elizabeth (D-WV) 1951-65
Kelly, Edna Flannery (D-NY) 1949-69
Kelly, Sue W. (R-NY) 1995-
Kennelly, Barbara Bailey (D-CT) 1982-
Keys, Martha Elizabeth (D-KS) 1975-79
Knutson, Coya Gjesdal (D-MN) 1955-59
Langley, Katherine Gudger (R-KY) 1927-31
Lee, Sheila Jackson (D-TX) 1995-
Lincoln, Blanche Lambert (D-AR) 1993-
Lloyd, Marilyn (D-TN) 1975-95
Lofgren, Zoe (D-CA) 1995-
Long, Catherine S. (D-LA) 1985-87
Long, Jill (D-IL) 1985-95
Long, Rose McConnell (D-LA) 1936-37
Lowey, Nita (D-NY) 1989-
Luce, Clare Boothe (R-CT) 1943-47
Lusk, Georgia Lee (D-NM) 1947-49
McCarthy, Karen (D-MO) 1995-
McCarthy, Kathryn O'Loughlin (D-KS) 1933-35
McCormick, Ruth Hanna (R-IL) 1929-31
McKinney, Cynthia (D-GA) 1993-
McMillan, Clara Gooding (D-SC) 1940-41
Maloney, Carolyn (D-NY) 1993-
Mankin, Helen Douglas (D-GA) 1946-47
Margolies-Mezvinsky, Marjorie (D-PA) 1993-95
Martin, Lynn M. (R-IL) 1981-91
May, Catherine Dean (R-WA) 1959-71
Meek, Carrie (D-FL) 1993-
Meyers, Jan (R-KS) 1985-
Meyner, Helen Stevenson (D-NJ) 1975-79
Mikulski, Barbara Ann (D-MD) 1977-
Mink, Patsy Takemoto (D-HI) 1965-77, 1990-
Molinari, Susan (R-NY) 1990-
Morella, Constance A. (R-MD) 1987-
Moseley-Braun, Carol (D-IL) 1993-
Murray, Patty (D-WA) 1993-
Myrick, Sue (R-NC) 1995-
Neuberger, Maurine Brown (D-OR) 1961-67
Nolan, Mae Ella (R-CA) 1923-25
Norrell, Catherine Dorris (D-AR) 1961-63
Norton, Eleanor Holmes (D-DC) 1991-
Norton, Mary Teresa (D-NJ) 1925-51
Oakar, Mary Rose (D-OH) 1977-93
O'Day, Caroline Love Goodwin (D-NY) 1935-43
Oldfield, Pearl Peden (D-AR) 1929-31
Owen, Ruth Bryan (D-FL) 1929-33
Patterson, Elizabeth J. (D-SC) 1987-93
Pelosi, Nancy J. (D-CA) 1987-
Pettis, Shirley N. (R-CA) 1975-79
Plost, Gracie Bowers (D-ID) 1951-63
Pratt, Eliza Jane (D-NC) 1946-47
Pratt, Ruth Sears (R-NY) 1929-33
Pryce, Deborah (R-OH) 1993-
Pyle, Gladys (R-SC) 1938-39
Rankin, Jeannette (R-MT) 1917-19, 1941-43
Reece, Louise Goff (R-TN) 1961-63
Reid, Charlotte Thompson (R-IL) 1963-71
Riley, Corinne Boyd (D-SC) 1962-63
Rivers, Lynn (D-MI) 1995-
Robertson, Alice Mary (R-OK) 1921-23
Rogers, Edith Nourse (R-MA) 1925-60
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R-FL) 1989-
Roukema, Margaret Scafati (R-NJ) 1981-
Roybal-Allard, Lucille (D-CA) 1993-
Saiki, Patricia F. (R-HI) 1987-91
St. George, Katharine Price Collier (R-NY) 1947-65
Schenk, Lynn (D-CA) 1993-95
Schneider, Claudine Cmarada (R-RI) 1981-91
Schroeder, Patricia S. (D-CO) 1973-
Seastrand, Andrea (R-CA) 1995-
Shepherd, Karen (D-UT) 1993-95
Simpson, Edna Oakes (R-NY) 1959-61
Slaughter, Louise M. (D-NY) 1987-
Smith, Linda (R-WA) 1995-
Smith, Margaret Chase (R-ME) 1940-1973
Smith, Virginia (R-NE) 1975-91
Snowe, Olympia (R-ME) 1979-
Spellman, Gladys Noon (D-MD) 1975-81
Stanley, Winifred Claire (R-NY) 1943-45
Sullivan, Leonor Kretzer (D-MO) 1953-77
Sumner, Jessie (R-IL) 1938-47
Thomas, Lera Millard (D-TX) 1966-67
Thompson, Ruth (R-MI) 1951-57
Thurman, Karen (D-FL) 1993-
Unsoeld, Jolene (D-WA) 1993-95
Velazquez, Nydia (D-NY) 1993-
Vucanovich, Barbara (R-NV) 1983-
Waldholtz, Enid Greene (R-UT) 1995-
Waters, Maxine (D-CA) 1991-
Weis, Jessica McCullough (R-NY) 1959-63
Wingo, Effiegene Locke (D-AR) 1930-33
Woodhouse, Chase Going (D-CT) 1945-47, 1949-51
Woolsey, Lynn (D-CA) 1993-

* elected but never sworn in or selected as Congress was not in session between time of election and expiration of term

Sources: *Women in Congress, 1917-1990*, (GPO, 1991); Mildred Amer, *Women in the United States Congress*, (CRS Report 93-624 GOV, 6 July 1993); *Members of Congress Since 1789*, (Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1985); *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774-1989*, (GPO, 1989); *Congressional Directory for the 103th Congress*, (GPO, 1993).

Women In Congress: A Chronological Listing

Of the 174 women who have served in Congress, 24 have served in the Senate and 154 in the House. Four women (Margaret Chase Smith, Barbara Mikulski, Barbara Boxer and Olympia J. Snowe) have served in both the House and the Senate.

Senate

Rebecca L. Felton (D-GA) 1922
Hattie W. Caraway (D-AR) 1931-45
Rose McConnell Long (D-LA) 1936-37
Dixie Gibbs Graves (D-AL) 1937-38
Gladys Pyle (R-SD) 1938-39
Vera C. Bushfield (R-SD) 1948
Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME) 1949-73
Hazel H. Abel (R-NE) 1954
Eva K. Bowring (R-NE) 1954
Maurine K. Neuberger (D-OR) 1960-67
Elaine S. Edwards (D-LA) 1972
Maryon Pittman Allen (D-AL) 1978
Muriel Buck Humphrey (D-MN) 1978
Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-KS) 1979
Paula Hawkins (R-FL) 1981-87
Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) 1987
Jocelyn Burdick (D-ND) 1992
Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) 1992
Barbara Boxer (D-CA) 1993
Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) 1993
Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL) 1993
Patty Murray (D-WA) 1993
Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME) 1995

House

Jeannette Rankin (R-MT) 1917-19, 1941-43
Alice M. Robertson (R-OK) 1921-23
Winnifred S. Huck (R-IL) 1922-23
Mae E. Nolan (R-CA) 1923-25
Florence P. Kahn (R-CA) 1925-37
Mary T. Norton (D-NJ) 1925-51
Edith N. Rogers (R-MA) 1925-60
Katherine G. Langley (R-KY) 1927-31
Ruth H. McCormack (R-IL) 1929-31
Pearl P. Oldfield (D-AR) 1929-31
Ruth B. Owen (D-FL) 1929-31
Ruth S. Pratt (R-NY) 1929-33
Effiegene Wingo (D-AR) 1930-31
Willa M. Eslick (D-TN) 1932-33
Marian W. Clarke (R-NY) 1933-35
Virginia E. Jenckes (D-IN) 1933-39
Kathryn O'Loughlin McCarthy (D-KS) 1933-35
Isabella S. Greenway (D-AZ) 1934-37
Caroline L. O'Day (D-NY) 1935-43
Nan W. Honeyman (D-OR) 1937-39
Elizabeth H. Gasque (D-SC) 1938-39
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Clara G. McMillan (D-SC) 1940-41
Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME) 1940-49
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Leonor K. Sullivan (D-MO) 1953-77
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Sources: *Women in Congress, 1917-1990*. (GPO, 1991); Mildred Amer, *Women in the United States Congress*, (CRS Report 93-624 GOV, 6 July 1993); *Members of Congress Since 1789*. (Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1985); *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774-1989*. (GPO, 1989); *Congressional Directory for the 104th Congress*. (GPO, 1995).

TABLE 1:

Number of Women in Congress, 65TH-104TH Congress (1917-1995)

Congress		Total Number of Women	House	Senate
65th	(1917-19)	1	1 (1R)	-
66th	(1919-21)	0	-	-
67th	(1921-23)	4	3 (3R)	1 (1D)
68th	(1923-25)	1	1 (1R)	-
69th	(1925-27)	3	3 (1D-2R)	
70th	(1927-29)	5	5 (2D-3R)	-
71st	(1929-31)	9	9 (4D-5R)	-
72d	(1931-33)	8	7 (4D-3R)	1 (1D)
73d	(1933-35)	8	7 (4D-3R)	1 (1D)
74th	(1935-37)	8	6 (4D-2R)	2 (2D)
75th	(1937-39)	9	6 (5D-1R)	3 (2D-1R)
76th	(1939-41)	9	8 (4D-4R)	1 (1D)
77th	(1941-43)	10	9 (4D-5R)	1 (1D)
78th	(1943-45)	9	8 (2D-6R)	1 (1D)
79th	(1945-47)	11	11 (6D-5R)	-
80th	(1947-49)	8	7 (3D-4R)	1 (1R)
81st	(1949-51)	10	9 (5D-4R)	1 (1R)
82d	(1951-53)	11	10 (4D-6R)	1 (1R)
83d	(1953-55)	15	12 (5D-7R)	3 (3R)
84th	(1955-57)	18	17 (10D-7R)	1 (1R)
85th	(1957-59)	16	15 (9D-6R)	1 (1R)
86th	(1959-61)	18	17 (9D-8R)	1 (1R)
87th	(1961-63)	20	18 (11D-7R)	2 (1D-1R)
88th	(1963-65)	14	12 (6D-6R)	2 (1D-1R)
89th	(1965-67)	13	11 (7D-4R)	2 (1D-1R)
90th	(1967-69)	12	11 (6D-5R)	1 (1R)
91st	(1969-71)	11	10 (6D-4R)	1 (1R)
92d	(1971-73)	15	13 (10D-3R)	2 (1D-1R)
93d	(1973-75)	16	16 (14D-2R)	-
94th	(1975-77)	19	19 (14D-5R)	-
95th	(1977-79)	20	18 (13D-5R)	2 (2D)
96th	(1979-81)	17	16 (11D-5R)	1 (1R)
97th	(1981-83)	23	21 (11D-10R)	2 (2R)
98th	(1983-85)	24	22 (12D-10R)	2 (2R)
99th	(1985-87)	25	23 (12D-11R)	2 (2R)
100th	(1987-89)	25	23 (12D-11R)	2 (1D-1R)
101st	(1989-91)	31	29 (15D-14R)	2 (1D-1R)
102d	(1991-93)	32	29 (20D-9R)	3 (2D-1R)
103d	(1993-95)	55	48 (36D-12R)	7 (5D-2R)
104th	(1995-97)	56	48 (31D-17R)	8 (5D-3R)

D-Democrat
R-Republican

Sources: Mildred Amer, *Women in the United States Congress*, (CRS Report 93-624 GOV, 6 July 1993); *Congressional Directory for the 104th Congress*, (GPO, 1995).

About The Author

(Ankers, Anderson and Cutler)

Shirley Washington earned a doctorate in political science from Howard University in 1978. She has taught at Wheaton College, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Ohio University. Dr. Washington's numerous publications focus on women in politics and African area studies.

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